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[SAVED FROM THE WRECK.]

THE KEEPER OF THE FERRY.

By the Author of "*The Bondage of Brandon*."

CHAPTER I

THE GOLDEN NUGGET.

The vessel springs her mast! and lies
A useless log upon the seas.

Sailing before the muffled storm,
Wrapped in a hundred clouds, with frown
As dark as death, and giant form
Threatening to rush in thunder down,
In lightnings and in deluge!—now
It comes!—It blows a hurricane.

Knowles.

The Golden Nugget was one of those magnificent vessels employed in passenger traffic between the mother country and her Australasian colonies. The captain thought a voyage to the antipodes a mere trifle, a thing to be laughed at, he had made many trips across the treacherous sea, without experiencing any disaster or misfortune. So he became very brave and hardened, laughing at storms and defying tempests.

About ten years ago the Golden Nugget was on her voyage home. She had rounded the Cape, having had unusually fine weather ever since she left Adelaide.

There were many passengers on board, and amongst them Sir William Wicherley and his wife. They brought with them their only son, a boy of six years of age.

Sir William had left England to go to Australia soon after the country began to attract emigrants, he had gone out in the interests of humanity.

At his own expense he bought a vessel, fitted it up, provisioned it and offered a free passage to the new and to one hundred and fifty people, men women and children; his offer was speedily embraced, and he sailed from his native shores with the full intention of founding a model colony.

For about six months he succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. Every one was happy and contented, the land gave forth its increase. There

were no newspapers, and lawyers were excluded, as is the prince of darkness from a church.

Sir William Wicherley's dream was, however, destined to be brief.

A cry arose and rang through the pleasant land, finding an echo in the settlement, where hitherto all had been peace and goodwill.

The cry proceeded from a harsh metallic voice, and said:

"Men of peaceful dispositions quit your agricultural pursuits, and be transformed into avaricious demons. The soil beneath your feet is veined with gold. Stoop down and collect it, pl'y the shovel and the pick, let the land till itself. Go ye and dig for gold."

The gold fever floated mistily through the air, the epidemic seized upon the settlers, and banding themselves together they left their rustic homes, fired with the greed of gold, and went up into the mountains.

Finding himself deserted by his people, Sir William Wicherley gave up the idea of being the founder of civilization in the wilderness of Australia. He left a few families behind him, to form the nucleus of a city to arise in a shorter time than he dreamed of, but he had no longer the heart to persevere. He was spirit-broken and disgusted.

His wife's health was failing. She had worked too hard in the new world, and she too felt the disappointment keenly.

Sir William intended to return to his estate called Baskerville Park, and there end his days in peace and quietness, in the bosom of his family.

Lady Wicherley grew worse on board the Golden Nugget; and to the inexpressible sorrow of her husband, who was fondly attached to his wife, was confined to her bed.

Soon after the ship had entered the Atlantic, she sent for her husband, who instantly quitted the deck and sought his wife in the seclusion of the state cabin he had engaged for her.

"Come close to me, William," she exclaimed in a low, sweet thrilling tone, peculiar to her. "I wish to speak to you on a very serious subject, and you must not lose a word I say."

He pressed her hand affectionately.

That small and well bred hand had once been the admiration of all who knew her. Now it was sadly withered and wasting away. The skin which hung upon the bones was transparent, and the knuckles and joints seemed to have lost their accustomed fleshy covering.

The once lustrous eyes were dim. The roses had flown from the cheeks they once adorned, and it was clear to even an unscientific eye that the unfortunate lady was not long for this world.

"I know you love me, dear William," she continued; "and for that reason I feel more sorrow at the announcement I am going to make to you. But it is as well that you should be made acquainted with a fact which will soon be patent to all."

"What is that?" he asked, having a faint suspicion of what she was about to say, but not daring to admit the fatal truth.

"I am dying. Do not start. We must not rebel against the will of heaven."

Nevertheless, Sir William Wicherley did start. He let her hand fall upon the coverlet, and exclaimed:

"You are low and nervous to-day. Why indulge such gloomy fancies?"

"These are not fancies."

"Believe me, you are simply desponding and conjuring up ghostly thoughts to worry you."

"Oh! no, William. I am not so silly. The waves let as they leapt up against the sides of the vessel have spoken to me. I have heard voices in the wind and I know that I must soon die."

Sir William was so affected and overcome at this declaration that he was incapable of making any reply whatever.

"The waves told me that they would soon circle my body, and the wild wind said it was preparing its wings to bear my spirit to a happier land."

"May I call the doctor, dearest, to set your fears at rest?" her husband inquired, thinking that the opinion of a medical man would re-assure her.

"If you wish it," she replied, meekly.

Sir William Wicherley rang a bell for the stewardess, and sent his compliments to the surgeon, begging that he would make it convenient to visit his wife.



The doctor was not long in making his appearance.
"Good morning, doctor," said Sir William. "My wife has some silly ideas, which I wish you to exorcise."

"I shall be very happy to do all that my poor skill will allow me," the doctor replied.

"Lady Wicherley fancies she is about to die."

The doctor felt his patient's pulse, put a few questions to her, and looked very grave.

The baronet was not slow to notice the cloud which sat upon his brow.

"Well, well!" he said, impatiently. "Why do you not speak?"

"You wish for a candid expression of opinion."

"Yes, yes!"

"I am reluctantly compelled, in that case, to confirm her ladyship's suspicions."

"What?" said Sir William, astagh.

"Lady Wicherley has not long to live."

An angelic smile flitted over the poor lady's countenance. She looked up skywards, resignedly, as if she had made her peace with heaven.

Thoughts, the most poignant and agonizing, coursed through her husband's mind. The doctor's fatal words were like so many sharp pointed daggers penetrating the region of the heart, and inflicting a mortal wound.

"Recall your words, doctor; recall them, and half my fortune shall be yours!" he exclaimed, scarcely knowing what he said.

The doctor shook his head, saying:

"I have told you the truth, and told it, moreover, at your desire. It is painful to me to pronounce such a verdict; but it is the only one my reason and experience will permit me to give, after calmly reviewing all the symptoms."

"The waves were right," you see, Lady Wicherley said. "The wind did not whisper falsehoods."

The doctor bowed and retired, leaving the husband and wife together.

"Oh! Clara, darling, darling, Clara; I never knew all your worth until this terrible moment," groaned the anguished man.

"You will be comforted, my own. Do not despair," she replied, hopefully.

"Must I lose thee?"

"For a few brief fleeting years—that is all. When your appointed course is run, we shall meet above."

For some minutes nothing was heard but the sobbing of the husband; the fervently breathed prayers of the wife.

"I shall soon follow you," Sir William exclaimed, in a broken voice.

He little thought how prophetic his words were, or how soon the prediction was destined to be realized.

"You will be kind to our child, William?" asked the affectionate mother.

"He shall be my only care."

"Let him be brought up in a God-fearing manner, and let him learn all those things which qualify a gentleman to act his part in the world."

"You may rely upon that."

"Tell him to love my memory, William, dear; will you?"

"He will not require telling."

"I have one more request to make."

"Make a thousand, my own loved one. Now that I am about to lose you, I could wish to have a life-long task to keep you ever uppermost in my thoughts."

"Oh, no," she replied, with a sickly smile, "I will not tax you too severely. You have been a fond, loving, and affectionate husband to me. Would that Providence had spared me to enable me to make some further return for all your goodness, but I must not repine at what is decreed by superior and infinite wisdom."

"What is your request, my darling?"

"I want you, William, to make a little tomb, and erect a cross to my memory, when you get back to our dear old Baskerdale. I know my body will be thrown into the sea, but you can keep some of my hair, and place it in a box of gold; over the reliquary you can build a mausoleum, and write something upon the marble outside. Come, tell me what you will have inscribed?"

Without thinking an instant, and as if the idea came to him by inspiration, the baronet exclaimed:

"To the memory of one very dearly loved while living, and lamented in death, with heartfelt poignancy beyond the power of words to express."

Lady Wicherley smiled her satisfaction, and continued:

"You are fond of mosaic work, William. Will it not be a pastime for you to write all my favourite texts upon the walls inside the tomb?"

"I will," replied Sir William; "but for heaven's sake do not overwhelm me by saying anything more. I cannot bear it, just now; I cannot, indeed."

Lady Wicherley tried to comfort her husband, but he refused to be comforted. The hand of fate was

descending heavily upon him, and he felt the affliction acutely.

When he left the sick room and again went on deck, he tried to persuade himself that the doctor was mistaken, and that his wife would still be spared to him.

With pardonable credulity, he clung to this wild belief.

He could not eat any dinner that day; he passed his time partly in leaning over the rail, watching the waves in gloomy inanity, and partly in conversing with his wife, who did not appear to grow worse.

Arthur Wicherley, the boy of whom her ladyship had spoken, was not informed of the critical state of his mother's health; he was too young to be told of so melancholy a circumstance until the last moment.

At ten o'clock, Sir William Wicherley was upon deck. Either from accident or by design, he was hanging over the side of the vessel in which his wife's cabin was situated.

He was in a dreamy, semi-somnolent state, scarcely thinking of anything. The calamity which threatened to speedily overtake him, and cut the thread of his wedded life, had partially stunned him.

Suddenly the noise of something beating the air struck upon his inert senses. He roused himself, and looked up.

A shadowy, gauzy, pillar of mist floated before his startled gaze, hovering for a few seconds between the phosphorescent sea and the starlit canopy of heaven.

This pillar of mist gradually assumed a human form. Sir William was gazing upon his wife, transmuted from her earthly state into that of an ethereal entity.

He could distinctly see the long flowing garments of snowy, spotless white which draped her body. He noted the fluttering pinions, lined with softest down, with whose help she floated on the breeze, and was poised in mid-air.

The face was turned towards him. Its expression was as serene as that of an angel. The lips moved, but no words were audible.

For fully a minute this remarkable apparition was vouchsafed to the wondering eyes of the baronet; then it vanished as it came—in silence.

Sir William stood on the deck, riveted to the planks, like one in a dream.

All at once, a dreadful cry broke from him. Was the extraordinary vision he had seen sent to him to intimate that his wife was dead?

Dead! The very word took away his breath, and made a coward of him.

Utterly regardless of obstacles, he rushed to the companion-ladder and descended three steps at a time. Opening his wife's cabin-door with more precipitancy than was salutary to the nerves of an invalid, he looked around him. Of the two lamps which gave light to the berth, one had expired, and the other was flickering faintly in its socket.

The ghastly light it emitted was sufficient to enable him to see his wife's face, livid and motionless. He felt her pulse. No motion was perceptible. No vitality was discernible. He called her by her name; but she gave him no answer. He addressed her in affectionate terms, without receiving any reply.

She was dead. He had seen her spirit on its way to heaven, and when her lips moved she was endeavouring to wish him an affectionate adieu. Perhaps the powers of the supernatural world, in consideration of the love these two bore one another, permitted this admiration of a happier and a better state to the sorrowing husband, bereaved of his wife.

When Sir William Wicherley was certain that the beloved partner of his existence was actually dead, his grief knew no bounds, he ran from the cabin, foaming at the mouth, with almost demoniac fury.

In the saloon most of the passengers were assembled, and the chief officers of the ship were whiling away the time in agreeable society.

Some were playing a rubber of whist. Some talking, others flirting; others playing and singing. So that it will be readily perceived that the baronet had intruded upon a little Babel.

When he was noticed, and people had marked his wild looks, and frenzied deportment, all conversation was hushed.

The most inveterate whist players forbore to play, and held their cards while they looked up in amazement. The young lady whose fingers were running nimbly on the keys of the piano, stopped short in the middle of her fantasia; and the gentleman in the corner, who was favouring a select circle of friends with his rendering of a popular comic song, halted in the middle of a refrain with the words "toorli li rooral," arrested in their passage to the outer world.

Sir William sank in the captain's arms, tugging hurriedly at his cravat. His senses were leaving him, and he felt a sense of suffocation.

Gaspings out the mournful words: "My wife, darling. Shocking sight. Gone for ever. Dead—dead

—dead," he lapsed into insensibility, and rolled on the carpet as still and mute and motionless as Lady Wicherley, whose death had just taken place.

The panic-stricken passengers crowded round the unfortunate man, and did all they could to lessen his chance of recovery by impeding the free current of air which he ought to have had.

They were well-meaning souls, but great blunders in the application of theory to practice.

When Sir William was restored to consciousness, he felt so faint and ill that his friends were obliged to carry him to bed. He continually mentioned his wife's name with most plaintive accents. He called her his own, and beseeched her to return to him. There was not a dry eye amongst those who listened to his pathetic exclamations. He spoke about the vision he had seen, and conjured Lady Wicherley to come again in a shadowy state. For notwithstanding the unreality and unsubstantiality of the vision, he declared it eased the almost insupportable anguish of his mind.

Those who heard his appeals to his wife's shade, fancied that he was temporarily insane, and pitied him as one who had lost his reason.

For days he was very ill. In spite of the attention of the surgeon; in spite of the captain's care, and the sedulous kindness of the passengers, he did not rally. His son Arthur was very good and dutiful; and Sir William was never happy when the boy was out of his sight. It appeared to be his chief delight to look at the boy's features, and with his eyes upon his face, "Very like her! Marvellously like her!" he would mutter.

Sometimes he caught hold of the boy's hand and cried:

"Come here, Arthur; your mother loved you."

The boy's eyes filled with tears.

"She loved you, I say; and made me promise to love you, and make an accomplished gentleman of you. We will begin as soon as we reach home again."

When the Golden Nugget approached the shores of England, the weather, which had hitherto been favourable, changed without the least warning. Dark banks of clouds arose, and the sky assumed a lowering appearance, which made the captain look wistfully around him, and caused the crew of the Golden Nugget to shake their heads ominously.

At about seven o'clock in the morning the storm burst upon the devoted ship with almost tropical fury. The wind careered with the violence of a simoom, and the captain of the Golden Nugget saw that his only chance of safety lay in furling every scrap of canvas and scudding before the gale with bare poles.

This he did.

Although not a square yard of sail flapped against the masts, the ship heeled over in a most dangerous manner, and rocked to and fro like a poplar in a storm. It was about the time of the equinoctial gales, and the wind blew persistently in the direction of the land.

At twelve the gale had increased to a hurricane: a tremendous wave broke over the ship and carried away the binnacle. This catastrophe was irreparable; for deprived of his compass, the captain of the Golden Nugget knew not whither he was steering.

When the imminence of the danger was made known to Sir William Wicherley, he rose from his bed, and proceeded to the deck with tottering footsteps. Love and affection for his boy made him apprehensive of some misfortune. The vessel was driving before the storm, and the captain, surrounded by his officers, was holding a council when Sir William reached the open air.

Directly the captain perceived the baronet, he approached him, and in a kindly manner endeavoured to persuade him to retire below again.

"Is there danger?" inquired Sir William.

"I fear there is; but when the gale subsides we shall be safe."

"Safe!"

"That is, in comparative safety."

Sir William would not be prevailed upon to go below. He took up a position in the centre of the ship, holding on to a rope, and watched the stupendous power of the waves as they beat against the Golden Nugget and urged her onwards.

He felt a pull at his hand, and looking down, perceived his son Arthur.

"You here!" he cried; "are you not afraid?"

"Oh, no! not with you," replied the boy, boldly.

"Go below, my lad," said Sir William; "it is the fittest place for you."

"Do not send me away from you. I like the sea when it is in a passion," said the child, whose simplicity was charming.

"You are like your father. I never knew fear."

"May I stay?"

"Yes; hold on to this rope. Mind yourself. Take care of this wave. Capital! only sprinkled a little, eh?"

A huge wave had passed over them; and had they

not cling to the ropes they must have infallibly been washed overboard.

The boy smiled, and looked up gratefully at his father, while he gave himself a shake after the manner of a Newfoundland dog, to throw the water off his Guernsey and pea-jacket.

The afternoon passed without the storm abating in the least; and as night approached, every one on board anticipated a frightful tempest.

The Golden Nugget had for some time been A 1 at Lloyd's, and she weathered the storm magnificently; the captain was only apprehensive because he was out of his reckoning, and did not know how to steer; he feared that he was being driven past his destination and the harbours of refuge, and into the German Ocean, which was not exactly the locality that a timorous navigator would choose in tempestuous weather.

The sun went down; and a deep gloom fell upon both passengers and crew.

CHAPTER II.

THE WRECK.

After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house, antique but creditable. *See Sloops to Conquer.*

On the coast of Norfolk is what is called an arm of the sea. The salt water went into the land, and presented the appearance of the mouth of a river; but it was, after all, merely a bay of exaggerated proportions.

The country people dwelling on either side of this "Wash," as it was called, were frequently desirous of crossing, and a ferry was instituted as a necessary evil.

The "Wash" was a couple of miles wide, and a journey from one side to the other was a laborious matter, occupying some time. Consequently the keeper of the ferry, a man of the name of Stephen Goodall, employed a small sailing boat, and made his journeys by the aid of the wind and a stout piece of canvas.

When the weather was calm and there was no wind, he was compelled to use a smaller boat, and sail across.

Stephen was a man who enjoyed the respect and esteem of all who were acquainted with him. He was honest and straightforward. His motto was—"A fair amount of pay for a good day's work." He lived by the sweat of his brow, and he was not ashamed of it.

Mrs. Goodall was one of those good ladies whom Shakespeare would have called a shrew; only, unlike Shakespeare's shrew, she was untameable. In the language of Oliver Goldsmith, she was a "tall, trapesing, talkative maypole."

One of her peculiarities was a fondness for money. Every coin which came in her way was as safe as a guinea in a miser's purse. She would frequently row people over the "Wash" with her own hands. This, of course, was only when her husband was fatigued, or wanted his dinner.

The keeper of the ferry had one weakness. He liked a siesta in the afternoon or in the evening. In summer, in the words of Gray,

At the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That lifts its old fantastic arms so high,
His listless length at noon tide would he stretch.

When the frost came and the snow was on the ground, he sat by his kitchen fire, listening to his wife, who was not always the most agreeable companion.

Upon the evening which ushered in the continuation of the storm which forced the Golden Nugget out of her course, the keeper of the ferry pulled his boat upon the beach, and wended his way to his cottage, which was situated under the brow of a hill, a short distance from the shore.

A light was burning in the sitting-room, and directly he had lifted the latch, he was in the presence of his wife and daughter.

The latter was a girl about sixteen years of age; a pretty blonde, of a good disposition, and, unlike her mother, possessing an excellent temper.

Her name was Mary.

"Why, Stephen, I thought you never was a coming," exclaimed Mrs. Goodall, in an acrimonious tone of voice.

Her tall figure, towering up almost to the low ceiling, made her resemble one of those extraordinary creatures who are taken about the country in caravans and shows, and exhibited under the title and designation of Circassian giantesses, and female Magogs, or Patagonian priestesses.

"Had a job as kept me," replied the ferryman, approaching the fire, in order to dry his nether integuments, which were sprinkled pretty freely with the spray.

"Then you shouldn't let no jobs keep you, Steve.

You knew tea was waiting," his wife remarked, with increased asperity.

"It'll draw all the better for keeping," Stephen replied, curtly.

"Draw better! Well, I suppose it will; but that's just like you. All for self. You never think of me, Stephen, do you?"

"My dear, how can you say that?"

"I do say it."

"You know you are never out of my thoughts."

"Stuff and nonsense!"

"Don't be unbelieving, my dear."

"I've been waiting here this half-hour for you to come in; and, I'm sure, Mary and me's been dying for a cup of tea."

"Why did you not have it, then?" asked Stephen Goodall.

"Have it? Why did we not have it?" exclaimed Mrs. Goodall, in a scornful voice. "Because we wasn't pigs, Stephen. Because we was expecting you. You'll break our hearts some day, Stephen, and then you'll be sorry for your treatment of me."

"I have heard that remark so often, my dear, that I am afraid it will take a great deal to break your heart," the keeper of the ferry said, ironically.

"That's as much as to say you wish it would break. Don't say no—don't go to deny it, Stephen, because it will only be chalked up against you. Oh, you hypocrite! Now I see what your real hopes and wishes is. You want me out of the way, you do!"

"My dear—"

"Don't 'dear' me. I know the hollowness of you. But I can tell you this: I won't die of a broken heart, to please you or any man living. The man who can break my heart isn't born yet."

"That's fortunate."

"Is it, sir?" cried Mrs. Goodall. "Oh! deeply—bitterly have I regretted the day I married you!"

"I don't know for certain; but I think you might have done worse," Stephen ventured to observe.

"No, I couldn't have done worse, neither; but I'll tell you what I could have done."

"What's that?"

"A good deal better."

"Do you think so?"

"I know it. Why, there was Langton, the butcher, Westland, the baker, to say nothing of Franklin, the fisherman, who were mad about me."

"Pity they didn't have you then," said the keeper of the ferry.

"That's just like you," replied Mrs. Goodall. "You can't open your mouth without being disagreeable."

"Come, wife," said Stephen, "let us have a cup of tea in peace, for once in a way."

"You may get it for yourself, then; I shan't move," replied his amiable partner.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing's the matter with me. You speak to me smooth and civil, and I'll do ditto."

"Pour out the tea. Come, there's a good lass."

"I shan't pour out no tea, I'm sure I shan't; so it's no good asking."

"I'll do it, father," exclaimed Mary, leaving her chair. "Mother's in a bad temper to-night."

"That's no reason why she should go on at me."

"She don't mean anything; it's only her way."

"I think I have a right to some kindness," Stephen continued, with an aggrieved air. I work hard enough. I'm always across that bit of sea out there. Sometimes I'm up in the middle of the night to take folks over, and it is strange if I can't have a cup of tea in peace."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Goodall, in a harsh, grating voice, "I remember when you had no ferry. You were glad enough to marry me then. Since you've been making a pound or two, there's no holding you. You're like a horse full of beans. If I so much as say a word, you kick over the traces in a second."

"If I hadn't the ferry, my father had; and I knew I should get it when he died," replied Stephen Goodall, in an angry voice. "Besides, if I do make a pound or two, who gets it? Where does it go to? Do I go to a tavern and spend it in drink, or gamble it at skittles? No, there's not a man on all the country side as can say I do."

"Come, father, sit down," said Mary, soothingly.

She was a good girl, and loved both her father and mother.

She made all the allowance she was able for her mother's infirmity of temper, but she could not help thinking she went a little too far at times.

"I can't sit down, my gal, when I'm nagged at in this way," replied Stephen.

"Don't take any notice."

"No more I would, if it was once in a way; but to go on for everlasting, nag, nag, nag, like a machine, is more than I can bear, er any other flesh and blood, I can't stand it, my gal. I can't, and that's the plain truth. Why, rather than lead this life, I'd go and throw myself into fifteen fathoms of water."

Mary had heard this declaration before, and she knew that it meant nothing serious.

Whenever her father was put out, he always threatened to throw himself into fifteen fathoms of water.

It was a peculiarity of the keeper of the ferry to say that he would be submerged in a given quantity of water.

"Oh! you are throwing that at me, are you?" cried his delectable spouse, sharply. "Very well; all I've got to say is, go and do it. Only I know very well that such cowards and poltroons as you dare not do it. Men as talks about suicide is always the last to do it."

"Don't mother—pray don't! Be quiet, will you?" exclaimed Mary, deprecating the rising of the storm.

"Who spoke to you?" cried Mrs. Goodall.

"Never mind," replied Mary, with unusual boldness. "Father's all very well if you'll let him alone."

"When he goes to his fifteen fathoms, you had better go with him; then I shall be rid of the pair of you," replied her mother, whose temper might have improved by keeping, had she given it the chance.

"Blame me!" cried the keeper of the ferry, "you're going it a little too fast, missus. You're riding to Halifax a-horseback, as they say; and I shan't stay to be ballyragged out of house and home."

"If you go, you will be," said his wife, with a sneer.

The keeper of the ferry ground a curse between his teeth, and, rising to his feet, put his tarpaulin hat upon his head with a jerk.

"I shan't ask you to stop," his wife exclaimed.

"Father, where are you going?" asked Mary silding up to him.

"Never you mind, my lass."

"You won't go out? Say you won't go out? Mother does not mean anything. Give me your hat. Let me hang it on the peg."

For the first time in his life, Stephen Goodall pushed his daughter roughly on one side.

"Get out of my way," he cried.

"No, no, father. I will not let you go away like this."

As she spoke, she clung to his arm; but, with a powerful effort, he shook her off. She staggered along the floor for a few feet, and then fell heavily to the floor.

"Oh, you brute!" exclaimed Mrs. Goodall. "You've been and gone and killed the child, you have!"

But Mary was not killed. She was not even injured. The shock had jarred against her nerves, and that was all.

"I am not hurt, father," she said, rising to her feet as she spoke.

"It isn't his fault, then—more shame for him," Mrs. Goodall said, pointing the finger of scorn at the keeper of the ferry.

Stephen turned upon his heel. His hand was upon the latch of the door. In another moment he would be gone.

Suddenly the booming of a gun out at sea was heard. The sound reverberated along the shore with a sullen echo.

All listened intently.

Again and again it was borne upon the gale, the fury of which was perceptible to those within the cottage, through the rattling of the windows, the loud dash of the sea against the beach, and the whistling of the wind round the corners and under the gables.

"Some ship in distress," exclaimed Stephen Goodall, forgetting his domestic grievances in the excitement of the moment.

"What a terrible night for a wreck," Mary observed, beneath her breath; adding, in a pious tone, "Poor creatures! God have mercy upon them and help them."

"Give me my fishing-boots, Mary," cried the keeper of the ferry to his daughter.

"What fer, father?"

"That's my business. Give me the boots. There they stand in that corner."

Mary did as she was directed.

"Now, reach me down the life-belt," Stephen continued, drawing on his huge boots as he spoke.

They were waterproof, and came up to his knees.

This request alarmed Mrs. Goodall, who hastily exclaimed:

"You are not going out to-night, Stephen?"

"I don't know," he replied; "but I think it looks like it."

The tone in which he spoke was both sullen and determined.

"But, Stephen—"

"It is no good you talking," the keeper of the ferry replied.

Mrs. Goodall opened the door and took a look at the night. The hasty scrutiny she made did not seem to reassure her. A gust of wind nearly blew her candle out. She retired, and resumed her former position by the fire.

"Mary," cried Stephen.

"Yes, father."

"Fill my pocket-flask with brandy."

"Are you going to the wreck?" inquired his wife.

"You have just hit it."

"It is perfect madness, on such a night as this."

"You shouldn't have driven me to it, then," he replied, adjusting the life-belt round his waist.

"Don't you care for your life?"

"Not much. It ain't worth having, at the price I pay for it."

"God forgive you for saying so!"

"Good-bye, Mary," exclaimed Stephen Goodall, without taking any notice of his wife.

"Must you go, father?" she asked, tenderly.

"I'm bound to go, lass—doubtless bound. There's a lot of helpless fellow creatures, whom I may be instrumental in saving. That's claim the first. The second is, I'm that upset, I couldn't sit at home if it was ever so."

"You will have a cup of tea first?"

"No, thank you. This is the best thing to drink on a rough night."

He took up the brandy-bottle, and poured some into a tumbler, drinking it off with great gusto.

Mary had never seen her father drink raw spirits in large quantities before, and she looked up in considerable surprise.

"It went down easy, my lass, didn't it? Something like bottled velvet, eh? There's nothing like it to drown care and another thought. Shall I tell you why men like brandy and whisky and gin? Because they're driven to it. They've no home where they ought to have one. They're nagged into the bar and the tap-room. They're right down regular nagged into it, I say. It's such women as your mother there that fills workhouses and makes the poor's rates heavy. It's such women as her that brings men to ruin and starvation."

Mrs. Goodall nursed her knees with her clasped hands, and rocked herself to and fro, without replying. She was sorry for her vehemence now that she saw her husband determined and in earnest. It was quite probable and on the cards that the sea might prove too strong for his boat; and if that were the case, nothing but a miracle could save him from being drowned. His life-belt would certainly keep him afloat; but it was an iron-bound coast, and the force of the wind, together with the power of the waves would drive him against the jagged sharp pointed rocks.

This was a contingency far from impossible.

Once more the booming of the guns was heard, and this time nearer than before. It was evident that the ill-fated vessel was drifting before the wind, and that she had not yet struck, as the keeper of the ferry had at first surmised.

"Get out the lanterns, Polly," said Stephen, stamping his heels on the floor to make his feet sink properly into his boots, and buttoning his coat over his breast.

Mary produced a couple of lanterns, the candles in which she lit.

"That's a good wench," said her father, approvingly. "Kiss me before I start."

She raised her tear-stained face to his, and kissed his weather-beaten cheek.

"What! crying. That will never do."

"Perhaps you will ne'er come back again!"

Mary sobbed, unable any longer to restrain her grief.

"Oh! yes, I shall. I place my trust on a rock that has stood for ages, my lass, and I know that I'm doing my duty in helping those poor creatures aboard the storm-beaten ship, which is evidently out of her course."

Mary wrung his hand affectionately, and gave him the lanterns.

"Stop at home, Steve, will you?" said his wife submissively.

"I thought you said you would not ask me," he cried triumphantly.

"What I said don't matter. Will you stop?"

"Too late, missis; you should have opened your mouth before. I'm bound to go now. Good-night."

He strode towards the door.

"Don't go like that, Stephen," his wife said, pleadingly. "Don't go without a word, or a look, or a God bless you."

The keeper of the ferry disregarded his wife's appeal, muttering "you'll know how to treat me civilly another time." He left the cottage, and walked down to the beach.

The noise of the guns again saluted his ears.

"They're hard put to it," he murmured.

The sea in the "Wash" was not nearly so tumultuous as it was in the wide expanse of ocean, properly so-called, and after Goodall had fixed one lantern to the top of the mast and another to the bows, he found little difficulty in launching his boat. He carried very little sail; only enough to cause the boat to skim over the

surface of the water like a bird. Grasping the tiller in his brawny fist, he steered in the direction from whence the noise of the firing proceeded. He was further aided in his search by the sight of rockets, which the sailors let off at intervals.

In the course of time he came in sight of a large ship which was rapidly drifting towards the shore, where, if it struck, it must infallibly go to pieces.

The mariners appeared to have no control whatever over the vessel.

It seemed to the keeper of the ferry that the rudder had been carried away.

He was afraid to go too close to the devoted ship; but, standing up where he thought himself within hail, he put his hands to his mouth to make a speaking trumpet of them, and warned the crew of the danger they were blindly rushing upon. The wind caught up his words and bore them in an opposite direction. Several attempts of a similar nature were equally abortive.

All Stephen Goodall could do was to follow in the wake of the ship, and watch for an opportunity of saving some of the unfortunate people on board of her.

He had not long to wait for the catastrophe he expected.

She struck upon a hidden mud-bank, and in five minutes the sea was making a clear breach over her.

A piece of wood floated by the keeper of the ferry. The light of his lantern fell upon it, and enabled him to decipher two words.

"Golden Nugget!"

That, then, was the name of the vessel.

Lowering his sail, Stephen Goodall grasped the oars, and paddled about gently in the neighbourhood of the wreck.

He dare not venture too close to the sinking ship, lest he should be a sharer of her crew's fate.

"Help—help!"

The words fell upon his startled ears, causing him to look about for the utterer.

The appeal for assistance was again heard by him. This time it seemed to be close to the stern of the boat.

Holding up the lantern, he perceived a man clinging to a spar.

There was something in his arms which the feeble light would not permit him to examine closely. By the aid of his boat-hook, Stephen drew the drowning man and his burden into the boat, and laid them at the bottom.

Without paying them any immediate attention, he continued to look about for some other survivors of the wreck; but he could not succeed in saving any. He remained in the same place until he thought it would be imprudent to any longer neglect the man whom he had rescued.

He found him sensible, but very weak. He offered him a little brandy, but the man refused it with a wave of his hand, saying:

"My boy! Look to him; never mind me!"

Stephen Goodall perceived the boy, who was the burden he had been unable to, in his own language, "put a name to."

The little fellow was in a state of great exhaustion; but the stimulant administered to him by the keeper of the ferry sustained his wan strength, and kept the vital spark from being extinguished.

Although Stephen Goodall was a strong man, he did not feel himself equal to the task of paddling about the scene of the catastrophe until morning.

So he turned his boat's head up the "Wash" and, spreading his canvas to the breeze, sailed homewards. The groans of the man, whom he had snatched from a watery grave, were incessant; which made the ferryman think that he was seriously injured.

Such was, indeed, the case; for when the ship struck, a piece of wood fell upon him, and came in contact with his head, in a violent manner. Most men would have succumbed beneath the force of the blow; but the paternal instinct, pregnant with love for his child, kept him up, and supplied him with a fictitious strength which, when the object to which it owed its birth, was effected, evaporated, leaving the frame unknit and almost lifeless.

Stephen was glad when he reached the landing-place, and heard the keel of his boat grate upon the gravel and stones, which formed the bottom of the little natural harbour he had run up to.

He sprang ashore, first of all, with the boy in his arms, and carried him to his cottage. His knock was responded to by Mary, whose face was radiant with smiles at her father's re-appearance.

"I'm back again," he cried, in a cheering voice, "and brought something with me. Just spread a blanket on the hearth before the fire, for I want to make this young gentleman as comfortable as possible. That will do. You look after him while I am gone, for there's another to come."

Both Mary and her mother bustled about with alacrity, obeying the ferryman's orders to the letter.

Stephen was not long before he returned with the man, who seemed fast lapsing into insensibility. The woman spread another blanket for him, and began to chafe his hands; but he shook his head sadly, saying to

"You are very kind; but your care is thrown away upon me. I am dying. Look after my boy."

He could say no more, for a rush of blood to his mouth took place, and nearly choked him.

The purple froth, resulting from internal hemorrhage, stood upon his lips, and his features were shockingly convulsed.

Raising his hand, the dying man struck his coat-pocket in a significant manner, and then pointed to his boy.

Stephen Goodall inserted his hand in the pocket indicated by the gesture, and drew out an ivory casket, curiously worked, and apparently locked with a patent key.

He held it up before the man's eyes, and, going over to the boy, said:

"For him?"

An inclination of the head intimated that the ferryman had rightly interpreted the gesture.

A flush of pleasure illuminated the countenance of the stranger, and a smile played around the corners of his mouth.

But the flush faded away, and the smile vanished; for the cold, chilling grasp of death was at his throat!

"Poor man! Cannot we do something for him?" asked Mrs. Goodall.

"He is dead!" replied her husband, whose more practised eye told in a minute that the spirit had fled. "Let us attend to the living."

Some more brandy was forced down the boy's throat, and he was taken up-stairs and put to bed.

There was every chance of his recovery from the effects of the shipwreck, in which his unfortunate father had lost his life.

The ferryman turned the casket over and over in his hands curiously, and searched in the pockets of the deceased gentleman for the key, but without being able to find it.

Mrs. Goodall was in favour of breaking it open; but this was a violent measure of which her husband would not hear.

"It is not our property, and we are not justified in opening it without the boy's consent."

So the matter rested for the present. The casket was safely put away, and the ferryman, together with his family, retired to rest, of which they stood very much in need.

The next day the shore was strewed with corpses, and numbers of people came to the ferry to have a look at the wreck, which could be plainly seen by sailing a short way out into the "Wash." A vast amount of treasure had gone down with the Golden Nugget, and divers were employed for days to collect it, and wrest it from the hungry sea which had engulfed it.

The boy soon grew strong; and, in answer to the ferryman's inquiries, said his father was Sir William; but, strange to say, he did not know his surname. He had heard him addressed as Sir William, and that was all he knew.

"I'll tell you what, Missis," the keeper of the ferry exclaimed one evening, over a pipe, "I'll adopt that boy. Something will come of it; you see if you don't. He'll be useful to me for the ferry; and as he has no home of his own, he will have to go to the parish if we turn him out."

"But the casket, Stephen?"

"Let that bide. It will be time enough to open that when the boy's a few years older. Let that bide till then. Come here, my little man, and tell me how you'd like to be a ferryman."

"Very much, I think, if I have only to sail over the blue sea," replied the boy.

This reply settled the question, and the only son of Sir William and Lady Wicherley—both of whom were dead—became the drudge of a poor man.

Such was the singular result of the wreck of the Golden Nugget.

(To be continued.)

A MAGNIFICENT bazaar was opened on the 17th ult., in St. George's Hall, Liverpool, in aid of the Southern (Confederate States) Prisoners Relief Fund. Contributions have been received from all parts of the United Kingdom, from Paris, Rome, the Southern States, Canada, and even from New York. More than £3,000 was taken the first day.

ALWAYS LEARNING.—Sir Walter Scott gives us to understand that he never met with any man, let his calling be what it might, even the most stupid fellow that ever rubbed down a horse, from whom he could not, after a few moments' conversation, learn something which he did not before know, and which was valuable to him. This will account for the fact that he seemed to have an intuitive knowledge of everything. Such, too, was very much the case with

the great Mr. Locke, the author of the celebrated treatise on the "Human Understanding." He was once asked how he had contrived to acquire a mine of knowledge so rich, yet so extensive and deep. He replied that he attributed what little he knew to his not having been ashamed to ask for information and to the rule he had laid down of conversing with all descriptions of men, on those topics that formed their own profession and pursuit.

THE ARCHDUKE.

A TALE OF THE MEXICAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER XL

Even whilst we speak

New notes arise. What is that awful sound?

Faint.

And do I ask myself why still
So shrinks my heart within my breast?
Why, by a vague and aching chill
Each stirring impulse is repressed?

Ibid.

SEÑOR MAR had scarcely taken his leave of the Count Viletto on the night of Ada's abduction, when he learned from some persons on the road that the Comanches had been in his neighbourhood. His informants could give him no particulars, nor were they certain that the hacienda had been plundered, but they painted the inroad in such colours that the startled master hastened homeward at full gallop.

On reaching the hacienda, and learning from the excited reports of his servants and the evidence of his own senses the extent of his affliction, Mar lost no time in dispatching a messenger to Count Viletto. While awaiting the count's arrival, he had the bodies of the dead Comanches gathered together and buried, and set his premises in order. The brave defence Ada had made filled him with an admiration for her he had never before experienced, and it was with the wildest wailings and regrets that he awaited Viletto's appearance.

As is generally the way in Mexico, in case of these inroads, the neighbours of Mar were too much occupied in guarding their own property to join him in searching for the captive maiden, and he was left to his own resources.

"Was there ever anything so unfortunate?" was his dolorous complaint, after the last of his messengers to the neighbouring estates had returned and reported. "The poor girl is surely lost to us. I shall not be able to marry her to Viletto. The count will not assist me in my schemes, and all my hopes of distinction under the empire will perish."

In all his lamentations he did not say a word of Ada's horrible prospects and sufferings, but merely whined at the probable failure of his selfish schemes.

Late at night, or early in the morning, while Mar, having collected the servants and labourers, was looking about the estate for the trail of the enemy's departure, and while Dolores was walking up and down the avenue before the villa, a terrific rush and clatter was heard on the road, the gate was burst from its hinges by an advancing object, and Pacheco and his mule plunged headlong into the garden, rolling over and over among the flowers.

"Death! furies! destruction!" came in a hoarse and guttural tone from the midst of this struggling mass. "Where are the Indians? Where are the miscreants? Let me have a chance at the sneaking devils! Car-r-r-ambra! let me only once find them!"

The discharge of a blunderbuss succeeded, and was followed by the reports of sundry pistols, and these ominous sounds were followed by a terrific slashing and hacking of a broadsword on the fence, and among the flowers and shrubs, the whole giving to Dolores the idea of a deadly conflict, and one of alarming proportions.

"Oh, Dios! have pity on us!" she cried, rushing towards the new-comer, whom she had recognised as her late gallant visitor.

"Hey, hey! have no fears," responded Pacheco. "They're gone—in full retreat—only eight or ten of them—a mere remnant of the savages! Yes, there they go," and he looked up the road, "the last of them just vanishing! And so, here I am, my fair maid, ready to act as thy loyal knight."

He bowed nearly double, and put up his weapons.

As the glimpses we have heretofore had of Pacheco suggest, he was a most amusing and interesting character. His social status was that of the great masses of the mixed races in Mexico, that of an ordinary labourer. A mestizo by birth—that is, the son of a white and Indian—he had inherited the intelligence of the one race, and the indolence and shiftlessness of the other.

Entering upon the years of manhood as a porter in the establishment of a shopkeeper, he had soon got into debt to his employer, and thereby fallen under the curse of peonage, a condition that we will briefly set forth.

By the laws of Mexico, slavery is forbidden, and all colours and classes are equal, in regard to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But, by still other laws, if any servant gets in debt to his employer, the master has a right to his services, at twenty-five cents per day, (five dollars per month,) until the indebtedness is discharged. The debtor thus situated is called a peon. In actual practice, this system becomes frequently the most hopeless bondage. By advancing a little money from time to time, and encouraging recklessness or extravagant expenditures, the master can keep the peon continually in debt, and so retain him in his service, at the low price above stated, until he gets old or sick, and then he is paid up, and thrust forth to shift for himself.

Pacheco had felt this curse in all its bitterness. His shopkeeper had kept him in debt for years, and ruled him with an iron hand, making his lot, like that of so many peons in Mexico, one of the most galling slavery. Yet he had studied many useful works, read a great deal, and formed a genuine enthusiasm for romance, chivalry, conquests, crusades, and all the romantic features of past ages. An arrant coward, he was all emulation, as far as words went, of the knights of olden time, and assiduously explored the chronicles of the middle ages for his pet heroes and exemplars. The result of all this was, that he had become a sort of grotesque imitation of a knight, making up in sound and fury for the lack of courage, and taking care to expand before strangers, or away from his hard master, and those who knew him as a mere peon.

At length, after years of servitude, Pacheco had one day won quite a sum at *monte*, whereupon he had discharged his indebtedness to his master,* purchased a mule, filled his saddle bags with romances, books of knight-errantry, &c., and set out on a romantic tour of the country. His expenses at the inns, however, coupled with an evil leaning to *monte*, born of his late gains, speedily exhausted his funds, and he got into debt, and wound up his temporary freedom by falling, mule and all, into the hands of Count Viletto, with whom he had since been living, as much a slave as ever.†

"My poor mule!" was the next exclamation of Pacheco. "I always rub his legs with mescal after such a hard ride, but I left the city in too much haste to provide the usual flask."

The hint was sufficient, Dolores excusing herself, and hastening toward the house.

"Say to Señor Mar," the peon bawled after her, "that the count will soon be here with some trusty friends, whom he has gone to summon."

The words reached the ear of Mar himself, who was approaching to learn the occasion of the extraordinary commotion in the garden, and who, after a few inquiries and observations, retreated to the house.

"Thanks," said the peon, grasping the pitcher of mescal, with which Dolores returned at this juncture. "I will just tie the poor beast in you bushes, and give his legs the necessary rubbing, rejoining you in one brief moment."

"But these books?" queried Dolores, picking up one of the ponderous volumes that had fallen from his saddle-bags.

"They are my favourite authors," rejoined the peon, picking up similar volumes scattered among the flowers. "The History of the most famous Knights of all Ages and Nations;" and so forth, and so forth. You shall some day read them with me."

He replaced his scattered treasures, and led the mule to the spot mentioned. Dolores thought she saw the pitcher of mescal elevated among the leaves, and was sure that Pacheco stood a moment in the attitude of a man star-gazing, to say nothing of her being still more positive that he did not remain absent long enough to rub the mule's legs, and she accordingly observed, when he rejoined her, breathing forth the odoriferous fluid:

"You rubbed his legs very quickly!"

"Yes, yes. Fact is, I only apply the sickening stuff to his legs, and he rubs them himself, fly fashion!"

"Will the count soon be here?"

"I expect him every moment. But have no fears, fair lady, I will protect you. As you have seen, I am aroused and full of the dread spirit of war. Yes, I burn to do deeds of glory. I have even had thoughts of joining the army, only you know what would be the result. My dauntless heroism would lead me to a

* The peon can pay his debt and become free at any time he can raise the money. He also has, by law, three days in a year to look up a new master, when the transfer of his services is simple, the new master merely paying the old one the amount due to him.

† It is an ordinary event for a Mexican labourer, after becoming free, to relapse into peonage. Sometimes the peon pays his debt, takes a lofty farewell of his master, and goes to a *palpa ria* for a grand rejoicing with some of his friends, gets into debt for liquors, clothes, &c., lies drunk a week or so, and winds up by sending to his old master to come and pay up, and take him back to his old position.

shroud. Some day there would be a terrific battle. From one side of the field, where I should be first assailed, you would see a mass of human bodies, piled in the shape of an immense snake, indicating my slaughtering course through the hostile ranks, and extending directly into the enemy's centre, and there, in that centre, surmounting the gory heaps of his slain, you would find the lifeless remains of Juan Pacheco!"

He snivelled, as if about to weep over the glorious end he was capable of achieving in battle.

"'Tis well your fiery spirit has been restrained," said the duenna, who thought him the very incarnation of a hero, and was much pleased and cheered by his protecting presence. "Yet how I wished for you on the night of poor Donna Ada's abduction. If you had only been here, all would have been well!"

"It would, indeed. The few mangled and battered savages that would have survived the fray would have reported to their tribes the wholesale destruction I should have inflicted upon them, and I dare affirm that the Comanches would never have dared to make another inroad into this region. Nay, had I been here, I should have passed into the annals and traditions of the Comanches, and it is likely that, in the generations to come, when the survivors should tell of my deeds, I should be known to them as a Swooping Vulture, Crouching Panther, Flying Wolf, Destroying Extirpator, and General Indian Annihilator! As it is, I think my presence and the other indications of coming destruction will drive away the thieving wretches."

"I do not doubt it," returned Dolores; "but did not the messenger tell you that the savages had all departed?"

Pacheco acknowledged that he did hear something to that effect, and omitted to add that his bravery was the result of the messenger's statement that not a Comanche remained in the vicinity.

While the couple were still conversing, the peon exhibiting a dauntlessness and gallantry worthy of his favourite knight, and the duenna assuming the soft air of feminine dependence, which she conceived proper to the occasion, the sound of horses' hoofs came from the road, and in a few moments a party of men rode hastily through the open gate and dashed up towards the hacienda.

"It's the count," said Pacheco, his lofty airs instantly vanishing, and he slunk away into some friendly bushes, with a sigh.

"You sigh," said Dolores, attending him. "Why?"

"It's my irksome position that's killing me," was the peon's reply. "I feel that I am dying by inches—wasting away—falling into a deadly decline! Soon will my withered form lie mouldering beneath the ground, and the wild flowers—"

"Oh, oh," sobbed the duenna, with rising tears.

"And it's all because of my blighted hopes," added Pacheco, beating his burly breast. "In these times, when every spendthrift Archduke that gets out of money goes round setting up empires in the name of God and Liberty, and when every freed peon may reasonably go prospecting for a countship or a dukedom, it is hard for me to be the slave of Count Viletto, and all because I owe him forty dollars! It is hard when I think of what I might be, to be a mere hostler, boot-black, and man-of-all-work. But here they come, señorita. Let's go to the house with them!"

The count was at the head of a portion of the Black Band, with Larro in their midst, and all disguised to represent miners. He looked pale and haggard, and it was evident that the news of Ada's abduction had proved a painful blow to him. His manner was full of excitement, as he sprang from his steed, and grasped the outstretched hand of Mar, who had come out to meet him.

"You have heard nothing more of her?" he asked, hoarsely. "She is really gone?"

"Yes," groaned Mar; "and I cannot get a neighbour to help me search for her. Everybody is afraid the Comanches may return, and must remain to protect their houses. These men of yours—"

"Are miners," interrupted Viletto, "whom I hastened to enlist in our cause. Where are your labourers and servants?"

"Here, and all armed."

"Then have them mounted, and let's be off. It's nearly daylight, you see. We must lose no time, though; as it is, we can easily overtake the savages, burdened as they are with cattle."

Mar turned away, a spark in his eyes, despite his grief, and he muttered:

"How much he loves her! Perhaps, after all, all is not lost. We may find her; and since he thinks so much of her, I shall then be sure of a title."

He hastened to order horses to be made ready for a large party, and then returned to the count, and said:

"If we take so many of the men with us, my dear count, who will protect the house in our absence? To be sure, the Indians are not likely to return—"

"May it please his excellency and yourself," interrupted Pacheco, with a deep bow, addressing Señor

Mar, "I should be most happy to take charge of the hacienda in your absence, and protect it from the desecrating hands of the savages. My trusty weapon," and he touched his blunderbuss, "shall do much execution, and my life shall be a sacrifice, before I yield the trust—"

"Very well," interrupted the count, impatiently. "I don't think you can do better, Señor Mar, than to leave Pacheco with the women, while we hasten on our proposed search."

Mar assented to this arrangement, and Pacheco and Dolores took the mule to a stable, and then hastened into the dwelling with the women servants of the hacienda, while the pursuers completed their arrangements and took their departure.

CHAPTER XII.

I am perplexed and doubtful, whether or no
I dare accept this your congratulation.

Butler.

The results of the search made for Ada by the count and Señor Mar can be briefly stated.

They had scarcely started, in the dawn of the morning, when they discovered that the savages had operated in divers bands, and left a number of trails, the most of them to the northward of the hacienda. Selecting one of these, the pursuers followed it nearly all day; but when they came up with the Indians, scattering them and rescuing several prisoners, besides much booty, they found that Ada had not been with that band. To return and select another trail, to be misled by hosts of conflicting rumours, to split up the pursuers into various bodies, and to spend three whole days without getting any trace of Ada and her abductors—these were all repetitions of the events which generally follow such an inroad of the Comanches as we have recorded.

At last, at nightfall, on Thursday, the 4th, the pursuing party returned to the hacienda, out of provisions, men and horses exhausted, several sick, and the count and Mar particularly worn out, miserable, and despairing. Viletto tarried only long enough to refresh himself, and then, saying that he had private affairs to attend to, and that he would return the following afternoon, he set out, with Larro, and his so-called miners, for Zacatecas, leaving Pacheco behind him, to bring him word if anything should occur or be discovered.

The night and day that followed were terrible to Mar. The hopelessness of his quest for Ada, and the general ruin in which his schemes seemed enveloped rested like an incubus upon him. He could neither eat nor sleep, nor remain any length of time in one place or position. Haggard, bitter, almost wild with his grief, he paced about the house, muttering to himself, occasionally stirring himself up to some slight effort, but spending much of his time in a listless apathy that was akin to despair.

"To think that I should be thus balked in the hour of my crowning triumph, after all these years of successes," he muttered, about the middle of the afternoon, seated in his luxurious parlour. "I may as well give up my projects, and renounce all hopes of securing a title."

His bitter thoughts were at length interrupted by the sound of horse's hoofs on the gravelled avenue, and he arose, passing through the court to the little entrance-gate, where he met Count Viletto.

"I have had no success in my further search," said the latter; "and I see by your countenance that you have been equally unfortunate."

"Yes," I am quite crushed," said Mar, leading the way into the house. "I have no word of Ada's whereabouts, no prospect of her return."

"If she were only here," rejoined Viletto, "all would be well. The Marquis de Valdo has fled, nobody knows where, with all his wealth. The French, two thousand strong, under Generals Douai and Castigny, are marching on Zacatecas, while General Ortega has retreated over the western border towards Guadalajara. These movements favour us greatly. We must find and seize Captain de Valdo, handing him over to the French. We must go into council with those who think as we do, and draw up, in the name of the city and state, a formal act of adhesion to the new empire. Thus, with a little management, we can make ourselves prominent, particularly in the arrest of Captain de Valdo, and so secure the favourable notice of Maximilian, on his arrival.

"Yes, that is all clear," groaned Mar; "but the one great cloud upon our purposes and plans is the absence of Ada. Oh! where can she be? Shall I ever again see her?"

"Let us hope for the best, my friend," returned the count, gloomily. "It is possible that she may escape—be rescued—"

He was interrupted by a great shout from the servants, and sounds of commotion came from the lawn.

As if actuated by a mutual instinct, the two men rushed out of the house.

"She's coming! she's coming!" was the cry of the labourers of the hacienda, repeated again and again by scores of voices.

"Who's coming?" shouted Mar, almost reeling with the hope the shouts inspired.

"Dona Ada, señor," answered his servants in chorus.

At that moment the lawn gates were swung open, and Ada and Captain de Valdo rode into the avenue, advancing towards the house.

"Dios!" exclaimed Mar, excitedly. "Don't you see, count? It's Ada herself!"

It was seen, as the maiden rode nearer, that she was weary, but her face looked strangely happy and smiling.

Viletto, after his first glance at her, had kept his gaze fixed upon her companion, and he suddenly started and exclaimed:

"Captain de Valdo, as I live!"

"De Valdo? Impossible!"

"Tis he! I've seen him!"

The startled plotters exchanged glances expressive of their consternation, and Viletto then added:

"I cannot meet him. Permit me to retire."

He retreated abruptly into the house, taking up a position near a window from which he could have a view of all the proceedings.

A shout of joy came from the servants and labourers as Ada rode up to the house, bowing to them, and sprang from her horse into her father's arms.

Pacheco and Dolores, who had been playing knight and princess somewhere in the back-ground, came out to witness the scene and share in the general joy; approaching as near to Hernan and Ada as possible.

"Thank God!" cried Señor Mar, as soon as he could command his voice and emotion. "Thank the good saints who have protected you and brought you home in safety, Ada! I can now carry out my plans—can now accomplish all my dreams!"

Somewhat chilled by the selfishness manifest in her father's words, Ada withdrew from his clinging embrace, saying:

"Now, father, let me introduce you to the gentleman who saved my life—Captain de Valdo!"

"Captain de Valdo! The guerilla chief!" ejaculated Señor Mar.

"The same, father," returned Ada, proudly.

Controlling any dislike he might have shown under other circumstances, Señor Mar advanced to the side of Hernan, who sat like a centaur, and extended his hand, saying:

"Accept my gratitude, Captain de Valdo, for the inestimable service you have rendered me as well as my child."

Hernan sprang from his horse, and shook the proffered hand warmly, avoiding allusion to his late services.

Pacheco advanced nearer to the guerilla chief, almost devouring him with his admiring glances; while the fond and susceptible Dolores burst into a flood of weeping, and clasped her young mistress to her breast, overwhelming her with fond epithets.

"And so Captain de Valdo saved your life, Ada?" said Señor Mar, when he received his daughter from the arms of her duenna. "Did he rescue you from all that band of Indians?"

"Yes, father," exclaimed the girl, her eyes glowing with enthusiasm. "The Indians carried me to Los Edificios, where we came to a halt, on Wednesday afternoon; and when the hour for sleep came, they tied me to an old squaw, as on the previous nights. For hours I lay awake, thinking of you, and home, and Dolores, and my poor pensioners; and, finally, I looked up—I don't know why—and saw Captain de Valdo approaching me cautiously, with his finger uplifted! Oh, what a happy moment that was! He untied me, mounted me and himself, and, finally, we got away—"

"And is that all?" asked Señor Mar. "Have you been on the road home since Wednesday night?"

Ada flung back her long straight hair over her olive shoulders, and her eyes shone like stars, and her voice was clear and ringing with enthusiasm, as she said:

"Oh, no, father. We rode to the eastward, and the Comanches pursued us. We stopped in the night to rest, and when we were about to proceed homeward in the morning, our pursuers came up. And then we took to flight. We would have escaped if we had not encountered another party of savages, in a ravine, headed by their fearful looking chief himself! On seeing them, Captain de Valdo leaped from his horse, drew me from mine, and he drew me up the hill. The Indians rushed after us, and I got weak and asked him to leave me, but he would not. He picked me up in his arms and hurried on with me, and finally stopped, turned around, and shot down our two nearest pursuers, one after the other."

"Oh!" cried Pacheco, admiringly, as he went through sundry motions of fighting and slaying.

"And, oh, father, you ought to have seen how his eyes flashed, and how grand he looked then! And then he picked me up again, and finally we got behind some rocks on the summit, and there we stayed all day long, until Captain de Valdo had shot all the savages but two. He killed the chief and four others. And, then, when the two survivors saw him spring upon them, so brave and dauntless, so like an inspired hero, they turned and fled!"

The girl's sparkling eyes, glowing cheeks, and impassioned manner, brought an expression of bitterness to the countenance of Señor Mar, and his manner showed that he felt uneasy and dissatisfied. The whole narrative had been like a dose of jalap to him. "Well," he said, in his usual quiet and impassable tones, "I suppose I can finish the story. You mounted and rode home, with the necessary rest, and here you are. You both need food, without doubt. Miguel," he added, turning to the butler, who had just shaken hands with Ada, "see that a supper be prepared immediately."

The butler disappeared, two or three of the servants following him, and Señor Mar was about to propose an adjournment to the house, when Pacheco, with a beaming face, rushed forward to our hero, saying:

"Captain de Valdo, your fame as a guerilla chief has been sounded from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but no heart have you found such sincere admiration as in this!" and he slipped himself in the breast with almost stunning effect. "For months I have lived only in the records of your thrilling experiences, which surpass the most brilliant novel I ever read. Will you deign, señor, to take me into your service? To give me a position near you, that I may share in your glorious deeds."

"Nonsense!" ejaculated Señor Mar. "What a fool that fellow is!"

"Then you wish to join my company?" inquired Captain de Valdo, repressing a smile at the peon's high-flown language. "You wished to enlist—"

"N—not exactly!" stammered Pacheco. "I had rather be your personal attendant, and sustain to you the relation of squire, companion-at-arms, commissary, and all that. "I should prefer," he continued, with his usual fluency, "to have my devotion to you and my beloved country untrammelled by oath and vows—to have it even the spontaneous ebullition of an admiring heart! Of course," he added, modestly, "I do not aim at the chief command of an army, though if it should fall in my way, I hope I should not shrink—"

"Pacheco!" called the count from his position at the window, in a voice of wrath and disgust.

The peon made no answer to his master, and continued to plead to be taken into the captain's service, and Hernan finally accepted him.

The count continued to call his servant, and Dolores finally said:

"Senor Pacheco, do you not notice the manner of the Count Viletto towards you? Is it because you owe him the paltry trifle of forty dollars that he thus addresses you?"

"Yes, that's it," rejoined Pacheco, in a tone of bitterness and sudden despair. "For that paltry sum my soul is daily and hourly hunted out of my body. My whole nature revolts at this tyranny. Better death—better the slave of oblivion—than this daily torture."

"But if forty dollars will free you," declared Dolores, her eyes sparkling sympathetically, "I can lend you that sum."

"Oh, if you could," sighed the peon, flushing with joy, "not all the gold and silver in the universe would be so precious in my sight as that sum in current money."

Dolores vanished into the house, but speedily returned with a gay velvet bag, from which she counted out forty dollars, handing them to the peon, with this remark:

"Now pay this heartless man what you owe him, Senor Pacheco, and be free. You shall repay me when convenient."

The peon bowed nearly to the ground, uttering his gratitude, and pressing the bony hand of the spinster to his lips.

He then advanced towards Count Viletto, who had come out of the house in a furious mood to seek him, and said, with a swagger:

"Here, count, is the miserable sum I owe you. No longer, thank the saints and the lovely Doña Dolores, shall the soul and body of Juan Pacheco remain in bondage to one whom candour compels him to declare so greatly his inferior. Take the filthy sum, señor; comfort yourself with the miserable dross, and adieu!"

He turned on his heel, leaving his late master holding the money in his hand, and looking angrily after him, and again conversed with Captain de Valdo.

"This time, most noble captain," he said, swagger-

irely, "you behold a free man—one who may aspire to the presidency, in fact. You accepted me before the interruption of yonder caatif"—and he pointed to Count Viletto—"and may I hope that acceptance still holds good?"

Captain de Valde smiled, and assured him that it did, and Dolores, regarding Pacheco as a hero, soon drew his regards upon herself, and they sauntered away together.

"Supper is all ready I daresay," now remarked Señor Mar, who had been considerably annoyed during the late scene. "Come in, Captain de Valde. Ah! Allow me to introduce you to Count Viletto."

Hernan and the count bowed distantly to each other, the horses were given into the care of servants, and the little party proceeded to the interior of the dwelling.

"Let me show you to a room, Captain de Valde," said Ada, with a graceful hospitality. "You will want to get rid of some of the dust of our ride, and also bathe your face and hands."

Hernan smiled and thanked her, following her to a pleasant and handsomely furnished room, where every necessary of the toilet was already in waiting for him, Ada having given the order for its preparation some minutes before.

And then the girl withdrew to her own room, and bathed herself, changing her garments for similar ones of immaculate freshness, and combing out her shining hair till it looked like glossy satin. Her bare olive shoulders so clear and polished, gleamed through her tresses looking like chiselled ivory.

Her toilet was quickly performed, and then having cast a last look at her piquant reflection in the mirror, Ada tripped from her room, knocked at Hernan's door, through which he instantly emerged, and they returned to the parlour, rejoining Señor Mar and Count Viletto.

The supper was in waiting, and the table, with its array of damask, glittering silver and cut glass, and sparkling china, all loaded with dainties, was provided over by Ada and Hernan, the count and Mar excusing themselves from joining them, on the plea of preferring a later meal.

When the repast was concluded, Hernan, declining Señor Mar's polite invitation to remain at the inn clouds over night, accepted the offer of a fresh horse, leaving his own in its place, and then bade his host and fellow-guest adieu.

Ada attended him to the door, where a fresh horse, with his equipments, was in waiting, under the charge of Pacheco, who was seated on his little mule, conversing with Dolores.

"Come down with me to the gate, love, whispered Hernan, with his grave tenderness, "I have something to say to you that I cannot say here."

Ada assented, and they walked down the path together, Captain de Valde leading his horse by the bridle.

"My darling," said Hernan, clasping her hand, when they were out of hearing of the two conspirators in the dwelling, "I have noticed the glances directed at you by Count Viletto, and am sure that he loves you. I need no assurance that you will be faithful to me. I know by my own deathless and absorbing love for you that nothing can ever swerve your love and faith in me; but I wish to say that your father is opposed to the Liberals, and devoted to the cause of the French, and he may command you to wed the count. In case of any persecutions of this kind, I want you to send me a note or come to me."

Ada nodded understandingly.

"I shall come to see you soon," Hernan added, "and state my hopes and wishes to your father. In the meantime, remember how much I love you, and be happy. Adieu, and may heaven bless you."

He pressed her to his breast a moment, and leaped upon his horse.

Pacheco unconsciously followed his example, pressing the form of Dolores to his breast, with characteristic awkwardness.

The captain and his new follower then rode away, followed by the glances of Ada and the duenna until they were out of sight; and then Dolores returned to the house, while the maiden seated herself on a rustic bench in the garden, under some trees, thinking of her betrothed, and nervously herself for the scenes sure to follow his departure.

(To be continued.)

THE QUEEN OF THE GIPSIES.—Her comfortable and neatly-kept palace has been visited by a considerable number of tourists, some of them occupying distinguished positions, and many having gone to Yetholm for the special purpose of paying their respects. Even proud Republicans from the other side of the Atlantic have sought a queenly smile in the palace of the Gipsy Queen, and other foreign visitors have also been graciously received by the accomplished ruler of the

wandering tribes. We understand that the Mayor of Newcastle paid her a visit one day lately, and he did not quit the royal abode without testifying his friendly feeling towards her by presenting her with a beautifully engraved "work of art" in the shape of a five-pound note. We also understand that she is not without some hope of receiving a visit from Prince Alfred on the occasion of his sojourn at Floors Castle.

SIBYL LEE.

CHAPTER XXII.

The times
Draw near to their fulfillment.
The high will fall, the low will be exalted.
Hark ye! But, keep it to yourself!
The end approaches.

Wolstein.

AFTER Margaret Harding had vacated her small, but neat little room, Hepsie Green had taken possession of it. As she had scornfully refused the sum left her by the late Goldsworth Lee, she was dependant on her own exertions; but the old physician who had attended her master's family for years having strongly recommended her, she had secured the post of nurse in one of the hospitals. Still, she was released from duty at evening, as she was considered too old to watch during the long, cold, winter nights. Tom Evans, the servant discarded by Mrs. Goldsworth Lee because he had refused to turn Hepsie from the door, was a frequent guest, and there they sat talking while the grey March twilight settled over the city, and the street lamps began to twinkle through the dusk. In a few moments they were joined by Margaret Harding, and then a loud, imperative rap announced another visitant. Hepsie hastened to open the door, half expecting to see the graceful figure and blooming face of her favourite, Alice; but, instead, she perceived two servants belonging to Mrs. Goldsworth Lee's establishment—servants whom her master had employed just before his death, one as a valet for himself, and the other as waiting-maid to his betrothed wife, when she should be installed in his princely home. Hepsie and Tom Evans had been but little acquainted with them, and were both astonished.

"Good evening," said the discarded nurse, coldly; "what do you want of me?"

"Be kind enough to invite us into your room, and we will tell you."

"Well, well," muttered Hepsie, "step in, step in," and the next instant they had entered, and she had closed the door and stood near them.

"Hepsie Green," began Frank Bentley, the valet, "your prophecy is to be fulfilled at last—at last Alice Hunt is to have her rights, and Goldsworth Lee's widow is to be exposed!"

Hepsie gave one of her impressive nods, and he continued:

"By heaven, she'll tremble when we bring her misdeeds to light! There has been foul play, as you thought, Hepsie; I was on the watch when she entered my master's chamber—concealed by the damask curtain dividing it from his little side-room, I saw and heard all that passed the night he died. Nanette, the waiting-woman, was on the look-out too."

"Go on, go on," cried Hepsie; and he proceeded to describe the scene he had witnessed at Goldsworth Lee's death-bed, and the attempt to burn his letter and confession—an attempt which the valet had thwarted by darting forward when Sibyl had left the room on some brief errand, and substituting an unimportant document for the papers he had snatched from the grate.

"When my master was buried," observed Frank, "I told Mrs. Goldsworth Lee what I had seen; Nanette did the same, and she bribed us to silence and employed me as butler, as she did not dare to have me leave her. Of late, however, she has grown harsh and tyrannical, and to-day I vowed I would have my revenge. I knew I had only to come here to rouse you and Evans, and interest you in the good fortune in store for Miss Alice. Tonight my mistress gives a great ball, and she means to entrust Edward Stanley, in spite of Alice Hunt."

"Frank," said the old nurse, "there's one thing I want to know. Didn't she have a hand in estranging them when the poor girl disappeared?"

"Yes, Nanette was eavesdropping when she offered Madame Berniere a round sum if she would not deliver the letters which came directed to her care."

"There, there—I told you so," exclaimed the little woman, turning toward Margaret Harding.

"And I believed it, Hepsie," rejoined Margaret; "I thought time would disclose it."

There was a short pause ere Tom asked:

"And now what are you going to do, Frank?"

"Tear off Mrs. Goldsworth Lee's mask," muttered the young man; "this evening, when the house is full of guests, I will come into the dancing-hall and startle her with a revelation that she won't like to hear! I can prove my statements by the papers I

snatched from the fire, and these I shall carry with me. Lawyers will be there by the dozen, and they can see for themselves whether I speak the truth. Look, look!" and he unrolled two documents, singed by the flames, but still perfect enough to be indubitable proof of what had been Goldsworth Lee's wishes, as well as the nature of Alice Hunt's claims.

Margaret Harding glanced over them with deep interest, and in a low tone repeated the substance to Hepsie and Tom. A brief conference ensued, and then the little party separated.

The church clocks had struck twelve, and the revel in the home of the late merchant-prince was as brilliant and enchanting as his ambitious widow could have hoped. Nothing in the remembrance of the guests could exceed the tasteful splendour of drawing-rooms, boudoir, library, dancing-hall, and supper-room, and never had Sibyl Lee been more dazzling than in that festal robe of scarlet velvet, with the costly over-dress of black lace, and the diamond sprays drooping from her magnificent hair. Her heart swelled with triumph too, for Mr. Stanley's family had been invited to grace the *soirée*, and though she did not dream that Edward had come after Frank Bentley's intentions had been communicated to him, she felt a wild joy at his presence. She had danced the last quadrille, and was daintily sipping a glass of wine, offered her by her partner, when Bentley and Nanette moved into the luxurious room, followed by Margaret Harding, Hepsie Green, and the discarded footman.

"What means this?" exclaimed Mrs. Lee, with chilling hauteur.

"It means, madam," replied Bentley, "that your mask is to be torn off—that the world is to see you as you are—a false-hearted unprincipled woman! I charge you to-night with the basest fraud, in keeping a poor orphan girl out of her rights; and I can prove what I say, too!"

For the first time for many years, Sibyl's consummate tact failed her; she stood pale and speechless; while Bentley, with a keen glance at the guests, who were beginning to gather around him, continued:

"I was one of the late Goldsworth Lee's servants, and employed just before his death as his *valet*. The girl at my side was engaged about the same time, as waiting-maid to the wife he meant to bring home in the course of two or three months. I was on the watch the night he died, when your present hostess crept into his chamber; I witnessed the marriage, and heard what followed. Mr. Lee mentioned a young lady whom he had wronged, and declared he intended to atone by changing his will, and bequeathing her a part of his property; but he had not been able to do it during his sickness, and so he had left a confession of her claims in a cabinet in the library, and put a letter explaining his wishes, under his pillow. Mrs. Lee solemnly promised to see justice done the girl known as Alice Hunt, and shortly after he died. When she was satisfied that he was dead, she seized the important papers and flung them into the grate, and then hurried from the room. I flew to the grate, snatched the papers, and secreted them.

"When my master was buried I told her what I had seen, and she bribed me to keep it a secret, as well as Nanette, her waiting-woman, who, like me, had been watching the strange proceedings. But we have finally resolved to expose her, and I have brought with me the documents that are really Goldsworth Lee's will."

With these words, he thrust the papers into Hon. Mr. Stanley's hands; and, after a hasty survey, the old gentleman read as follows:

"To ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—I, Goldsworth Lee, have been a hard, grasping man, and for years no generous impulse has stirred my heart. It has been cast in gold! But now, as I stand looking out into eternity, I feel the terrible sting of conscience, the serpent's tooth of remorse, and they drive me to make reparation to the wronged."

"It was in 18— that a relative in England left a handsome legacy to my brother Otis and myself. He was dead, and beyond the need of help; but I knew his child was living in want, and doomed to hardship and privation. My brother's marriage had been a secret one, and his little girl had not been suffered to bear his name, and therefore it was no difficult task to keep her in ignorance, and increase my own fortune by what belonged legally to her. Her fair face, her blue eyes, her sweet, pleading voice have haunted me perpetually; but not till to-day would I acknowledge her as heiress to half my estates.

(Signed) "GOLDSWORTH LEE."

The attorney then proceeded to read the solemn and impressive letter traced in Goldsworth Lee's last hours; and, as he paused, Hepsie Green sprang forward, exclaiming:

"Ah, I knew it would come to light. I was Mr. Lee's family nurse, and grew old in his service, and I heard him talk on his death-bed of Alice and her claims; and when the will made no mention of her, I was sure there was foul play."

"Friends!" exclaimed a deep-toned but musical voice, which sounded through the room like the low notes of an organ; and Bernard Castinelli, the great baritone, advanced to the hostess. "Mrs. Lee did not invite me to her festival; but I have come, nevertheless. I, too, have a revelation."

The guests gazed at him in the utmost surprise, and he continued:

"Sibyl Lee has been wearing false colours in your midst. Ten years ago a band of notorious forgers was discovered, and it was ascertained that the most skillful of the forgeries had been committed by a woman, scarcely out of her teens, while her father had assisted her in drawing the forged checks. Many of the gang were seized, tried, and sentenced to life-long imprisonment; but Holt Lee and his daughter escaped, and fled to South America. There a guerrilla chief fell desperately in love with her, and they were married. After his death, his brother, who had come from Italy to join him, fancied he had won the heart of the fair one, and at length, when danger threatened him, they all sailed for England. There they found a humble home, and the lover, who had been born in the land of song, changed his profession to that of an opera singer. Returning from a long tour, his heart burned at the thought that she whom he considered his own had wedded a wealthy merchant, and had not the grave closed over him, Goldsworth Lee would have met a terrible vengeance! Sibyl, the enchantress, belongs to me. While I live no man shall stand beside her at the altar! Come, Sibyl—let us fly to the broad pampas, and the mountain-fastnesses where we once found shelter!"

But the woman did not heed it; she had sunk upon the carpet in violent hysterics, and while she was borne to her chamber, the "drawing-room" was transformed into a court of inquiry.

It would be impossible to describe the wonder of the guests as they listened to the disclosures which were made, and examined the papers which still bore evidence of the flame. They at length dispersed, and the next morning the whole town rang with the strange news.

Sibyl Lee never recovered from the shock. In a week she lay entombed in the churchyard.

And Alice Hunt? When her uncle's confession and letter had been read to her, and the Stanleys, who had paid a congratulatory call, had left the house, she turned to Miss Harding, and said:

"Are you really my aunt Margaret?"

"No, child; no."

"Then why have you been so faithful to me from my very childhood?"

"Alice, in my youth I had my dreams. I loved your father, and I believe I should have been his wife had not the machinations of Sibyl estranged us."

"You knew her then?" observed Alice.

"Yes; but it was before disgrace had settled upon her, and when she was very gay. Still, I cannot help thinking she forged the letters which sundered me from Otis Lee for ever. There, there—drop the subject, and do not allude to it again."

The girl obeyed; but in her prayers and thanksgivings she always remembered Margaret Harding.

As for Castinelli, nobody had noticed his abrupt departure in the stir which had followed those startling revelations; but when he gained the cottage tenanted by Beatrice, the flower-girl, the night of Sibyl's death, he exclaimed:

"This climate is too cold for you, carissima; we will have a summer home."

Beatrice smiled assent, and a week later they sailed.

Castinelli once more joined his famous band, and he had not long been in the old haunts when he met a party of Apache warriors.

"I hope," he observed, "that Latourah is well and happy."

The Indians shook their heads, and replied:

"No, no; she has gone to the hunting-ground beyond the grave."

"And why did she befriend me?"

"Because she hated Captain Gault, the pale-faced leader of the warriors who hunted you and your braves like a wolf or a deer. He had talked of love to her, and when he went away and failed to keep his promises, a slow fire burned in her heart, wasting it to ashes. We have haunted her death-hymn, and laid her in the woods where we encamped when she brought you from the far-off mountains."

With these words they moved on, and Castinelli resumed his journey.

That night, an hour after he reached the rendezvous where his comrades were awaiting him, and preparing for an attack on some poor travellers, a sharp cry rang on the air:

"Down with them—down with them—death to the guerrillas!"

Panic-stricken, the men prepared for resistance; but were all shot or captured save Bernard Castinelli, who managed to effect his escape. The authorities started

in mad pursuit, and on, on, through the dim mountain passes, the dense forest, and across the wide pampas, dashed the fugitive; but a rifle-shot aimed by old Pierre Rogot felled him to the ground, and he was taken up dead—Beatrice, his dark-eyed wife, mourning him as if he had been what he professed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Still and deep,
Like a rich jewel gleaming in a grave—
Like golden sand in some dark river's wave—
So did her soul that costly knowledge keep,
So jealousy—a thing o'er which to shed,
When stars alone behind the drooping head,
Lone tears.

For a time after the tragedienne's visit to Raymond Oliver, he had seemed more stern and bitter than before. Rachel's statement had established a free-masonry between her and the child; but though the tragedienne's name was a forbidden word in the household, it was sweet to Katy to know the nature of the ties which bound her to Agnes Edgecombe.

But an unlooked-for event betrayed Rachel's confidence and changed the whole course of affairs. A traveller, who stopped at the cottage happened to leave a newspaper. Katy took it up, and was glancing over it, when she espied the following:

"POSSIBLY LAST APPEARANCE OF AGNES EDGECOMBE, THE GREAT TRAGEDIEENNE.—With the laurel yet green on her brow, Miss Edgecombe has resolved to leave the stage, and is now playing her farewell engagement. We learn that her health is much impaired, and she anticipates another tour, in the hope of recruiting her wasted energies."

Katy's eyes filled with tears as she read; and moving to her father, she placed the sheet in his hands, and pointed out the paragraph, sobbing as if her little heart would break.

"Fan, Fan," cried Mr. Oliver, angrily—"you drive me mad with your whining about that woman!"

"Papa, she my mother," murmured the child.

Raymond Oliver descended from his seat in a perfect paroxysm of rage and chagrin.

"Who, who," he hissed, "has been whispering false stories in your ear?"

"I have been telling her the truth, sir," said Rachel, moving towards him.

"And broken your promise," sneered Mr. Oliver, white with passion.

"A bad promise is better broken than kept, sir; I was prejudiced against Catherine, but that sight by your own hearth touched me, when it failed to move you."

A stormy scene ensued; but in spite of Rachel's remonstrances and Katy's prayers, he seemed obdurate.

The next day, when the child and the housekeeper were both absent, a lady, attended by a groom, dashed to his door, and dismounting, entered unannounced. As she flung back her veil, the fire-light shone on the faultless features of Lillian Ethridge, and Mr. Oliver advanced to meet her with a sarcastic curl of the lip, and a strange gleam in his eyes.

"Pray," he began, "to what am I indebted for the honour of this unexpected visit?"

"I have come in behalf of my sister Catherine—noting else would bring me to your door. Raymond Oliver, you have drawn her from her home—her friends—you have subjected her to trial, and sacrifice, and all the disagreeable concomitants of the stage, and yet you now banish her from her child, and toss her heart about like a foot-ball."

"A grave charge, Miss Ethridge."

"Grave, but true—you cannot, you dare not deny it! She is pining for her child, and you have driven her from the shadow of your roof; gentlemen, who deserve the name, would be proud to marry her, but she is as faithful to that marriage-vow as if you regarded it." And she sketched with graphic power the devotion of Lawrence Ashburton.

"He is strangely infatuated," observed Oliver, with provoking coolness.

"There was a time when you professed to be," said Lillian, not in the least abashed; "and at this late hour of your life, it is but just that you should restore Katy to her mother!"

Miss Ethridge was firm and spirited in her appeal, but it apparently had no effect on that man of iron will. Lillian left him in no enviable mood, and returned to her sister with no hope to light up the tragedienne's face, and cheer her drooping spirits.

As the spring came on, however, disease fastened on Raymond Oliver, and he sank into a quick decline. Then the sight of little Katy thrilled him with remorse, and he despatched a letter to Lawrence Ashburton, whose address he had ascertained, begging him to hasten to him, as he had important facts to disclose, with regard to Agnes Edgecombe, the great tragedienne.

Travelling day and night, Ashburton soon reached the place, and hurried into the cottage, where the dying man lay.

"I am Lawrence Ashburton," he observed, by way of introduction.

"And I am Raymond Oliver, sir," replied his host,

"and the husband of Agnes Edgecombe."

"Her husband! Oh, my God!" exclaimed the young man—"this is terrible—terrible!"

"Sit down and listen to me, sir. I thought I should never humble myself as I do now, but circumstances have entirely revolutionized me. I am the son of a gentleman, and was disinherited by my father for choosing the stage as my profession. I secretly left home, and joined a company of actors, with whom I visited various towns and cities. In the third year of my dramatic life, I accidentally made the acquaintance of Catherine Ethridge, the daughter of a proud, old family. In her I saw the elements of a splendid actress, and resolved to marry her, if possible, that she might win the fortune I was too idle to gain. Lured by my promises of eternal constancy, she eloped with me, and we were privately married by a clerical friend of hers, whom we persuaded to perform the ceremony. She at once commenced studying for the stage, and her *début* made such a sensation, that I congratulated myself not a little at the treasure I had won. At length I threw off the mask, and grew cold, bitter, and exacting, and when an actor, in a fit of passion, told Catherine my object in winning her; we were effectively alienated. While she was playing Queen Elizabeth to a crowded house, I fled with our child, and when no effort could discover us, she came to the conclusion that we were both dead."

He paused an instant, and then rehearsed the particulars of Catherine's meeting with her child in London, and what had occurred at his return, and subsequently during her visit to her country home.

"Thus you see," he added, "I have told you a plain, unvarnished story. I know your love for Catherine, and now I can hope that when I am gone you will make her happy. She is still in London, trying to gain strength to go abroad, and there you will find her."

Lawrence Ashburton knew not what to say; in deep emotion he grasped Oliver's hand, shook it nervously, and turned away.

In the early autumn, when the woods were golden with bloom, a funeral train wound from that low cottage, bearing Raymond Oliver to his last resting-place. There stood Catherine and her child, hand-in-hand—Lawrence Ashburton and Lillian, and the restless little figure of Rachel.

When a year had passed, a happy family gathered in Lawrence Ashburton's home. The young man had claimed the reward of his devotion, and Catherine was now his wife, and her little Katy the pet and companion of both.

Mrs. Wait stared in surprise and envy, when she chanced to see her former serving-girl in Mrs. Ashburton's carriage; but lame Mary and Ruth rejoiced in her prosperity, as they had sympathized in her adversity.

Rachel acted as housekeeper in Mrs. Ashburton's establishment, and when other children were born to the pair, divided her love between them and Katy.

The most splendid wedding of the season took place when Edward Stanley and Alice Lee plighted their vows within the gray walls of King's Chapel, and all the *élite* of the town were gathered to witness the bridal. There were six bride-maids, among whom were Grace and Dora Stanley, and Bertha St. John; but, beautiful as they were, they could not eclipse the radiant bride, with her bewildering smiles and blushes, her white-robed form, and her sweet, low tones.

Though there had been a time when Mrs. Stanley and Grace would have rejoiced to see Alice supplanted by Helen Endicott, or even the rich widow, the change in the young girl's fortunes proved magical. They were now in their element, and never so proud as when promenading the halls where Mrs. Edward Stanley presided with such ease and grace.

Helen Endicott's hundred thousand has never succeeded in securing "a suitable match," and she is still one of the most disagreeable of the class of spinsters.

On returning from his travels, Hollis Rivers hastened to meet Alice once more; and the arch and beautiful Dora consoled him for his loss.

Lillian Ethridge found a lover, whom she believed as devoted as Lawrence Ashburton, and she and Catherine lived as neighbours. Trial had elevated and purified both, and Lillian daily rejoiced to see that Catherine was no longer the star of the tragic stage, but the star of a good man's home.

Margaret Harding continued to reside with Alice Stanley, and Hepsie returned to her old post, but her duties were merely nominal.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Stanley are still among the most estimable citizens of London; their gold has flowed into fertilizing channels, and in these days, when there is so much to arouse the sympathies, many a poor family has had cause to bless the wealth amassed by Goldsworth Lee, the merchant prince.

THE END.



LADY VENETIA.

CHAPTER I

Fixed in my heart, my Love, nor Time can it withdraw!
For firm is my resolve to hold it there,
Long as I live!—though life should never end!

Now say, what is thy gain,
Thou undomi' mie'st blind?
Reply, if thou art able: there is none.
A curse hath been thy couch,
Which oft deceived thee with vain flatt'ring dreams;
Accursed thy unprofitable store—
Less lost if flung to dogs—
For late and early thou hast reaped,
And fondly grasped with both thy hands
That which so soon shall leave thee.

Canzoniere.

LA TEMPESTA was a small gothic chapel situated on the coast of Sicily, overlooking the blue bosom of the Mediterranean. It stood upon a jutting headland, exposed to the storms that so often sweep, with irresistible force, over southern latitudes; hence its name.

Its interest, in connection with our present story, lies in the fact that it was the private chapel belonging to a family of historic name, great wealth, and aristocratic pretensions.

The Marquis of Colonna, its present owner, was the descendant of the distinguished Italian family of that name, a branch of which had emigrated to Sicily and founded the fortunes of his house.

The Castle of Colonna stood upon a neighbouring eminence, also overlooking the sea; but the beautiful country spread out on the landward side was even more attractive than the wide sweep of waters bathed in purple light, with islands scattered like gems of verdure over them.

Well might the ancients have named Sicily the "Island of the Sun," the "Garden of the Hesperides," for no land is more beautiful or productive.

The country sloped away in hill and valley many miles, even to the base of Mount Etna, which loomed in the far distance, an object of grandeur and often of fear. The lower slope was covered with vineyards, olive orchards, and groves of mulberries, mingled with fields of grain and small enclosures, in which were found every variety of tropical fruit.

This was the region of beauty and abundance, and it extended far up the side of the volcano, with many towns and villages nestling among the verdant groves. Ascending still, the second region is covered with pine and cork trees, amid which the hunter finds game in abundance to reward him for his toilsome ascent. Still above this rises the glittering crown of

[LUCIA PLAYING TO THE MARQUIS.]

the monarch of the isle, covered with everlasting fields of ice and snow, reflecting back the dazzling rays of the sun upon the hoary head which towers ten thousand feet above the plain, so cold without, a seething gulf of flame within.

A faint line of smoke curled upward from its formidable crater, which has never for one instant ceased to rise since the first period of recorded time.

Those living in smiling plenty below seldom gave a thought to the volcano, often as the old giant has spoken in his wrath, and shaken not only his own throne to its very centre, but made his thunders felt in far distant lands, while human life was offered as a costly sacrifice to appease his wrath.

In one earthquake sixty thousand persons had perished; and in another, four thousand towns and villages were laid desolate in a moment of time, and their inhabitants annihilated.

The Castle of Colonna was a comparatively modern structure, and very substantially built. The first marquis, who emigrated from Italy, thought he could defy the earthquake and the storm by erecting walls of such thickness that they could not be overthrown by any convulsion of nature, and stone upon stone was laid till the huge pile was completed to his satisfaction.

The building, with its offices, covered an immense space of ground; but the central portion alone arose to two stories in height, and subterranean grottoes were hollowed out of the solid stone on which it was founded, designed as a refuge in case of an eruption from its magnificently but dangerous neighbour.

From these grottoes it was said that a communication had been opened to the vaults beneath the chapel, though the officiating priest denied all knowledge of the existence of subterranean chambers that communicated with the church. To this the reply was made that to the lords of Colonna alone was their locality known, and it was confidently asserted that the opening leading into these vaults was so artfully concealed that, without some previous knowledge of its situation, it would be quite impossible to find it. Vast treasures were said to be concealed there, which had accumulated during times of peace, and been thus placed beyond the reach of rapacious rulers, in the dark days which Sicily has so often seen dawn upon her.

The present marquis was a man far advanced in life, who had the reputation of hoarding his gold for the purpose of endowing it with his younger and favourite son. The hereditary estate would sufficiently endow his elder one, while Vittorio, the child of his old age, would inherit his savings.

The windows of a spacious apartment opened to the floor, and the light iron veranda, that ran the whole length of it, was filled with vases of fragrant flowers, whose odour floated through the atmosphere, a subtle and ever enjoyable pleasure in that land of blossoms.

The room was luxuriously furnished, and its appearance indicated no intention on the part of the marquis to deprive himself of any indulgence for the purpose of increasing the fortune he designed for his son. In truth, the revenues of his estate were so ample that he could support his establishment on a magnificent footing, and still save large sums for the future endowment of Vittorio.

He now sat near a window, looking over a book of engravings illustrating the past history of Sicily, with its many mutations, and he sighed to think she had sunk from the glory of her palmy days to become the appanage of a military despot. Yet he crushed down the rebellious thoughts that arose within him, for he felt that any aspiration after freedom was dangerous; and he mused on the future of his best-loved son, for so generous and impulsive was Vittorio, that he dreaded what the future might bring forth for him.

The marquis was a small, dark man, with deeply set black eyes, and a mouth which indicated a power of reticence known to but few people. His features were regular, and his thin face haughty in its expression. His form was slightly bent, for old age pressed heavily upon him, and for years, he had been suffering from some chronic malady which required constant care. He had married twice—the first time the daughter of a noble house, who died within the first year of their union, leaving a son to inherit the wealth she had brought him.

For many years Colonna remained a widower. He was verging toward his fiftieth year when he saw and loved a young girl whose station was far beneath his own. Then, for the first time, he felt the sacred flame of genuine affection; his first union had been made to please his family; in this one he would please himself, and Pepita Durazzo became his wife. She was but eighteen, but her grateful and affectionate heart clung with tenderness to him who had lifted her from dependence on indifferent relatives to become the partner of his life, the mistress of his stately home; and for many years the marquis enjoyed such happiness as he had not once thought that earth could bestow.

She also gave him a son, the beautiful and brilliant Vittorio, who was the darling and pride of both his parents. Two years before the opening of our story the marchesa suddenly died, leaving her family in-

consolable for the loss of the bright spirit which had so long been its central object of interest.

In her last hours she called to her bedside a young orphan she had reared, and exacted from her a promise that, so long as the marquis desired to retain her among his dependents, she would not be tempted to leave him.

Next to herself, Lucia was the tenderest and best of nurses, and no one knew so well as the dying woman the care which her invalid husband required. She was moved to make this request of her protégée because Lucia possessed one talent which might become the means of luring her from the home of her youth in the hope of winning independence through it.

She had a rare and flexible voice of such compass as to fill the little church upon the hill, and an opera manager in Reggie, who had heard her sing while on a visit to that place with her patroness, had already offered her an engagement on very liberal terms.

The promise was readily given, for the dying lady had been a mother to the weeping girl beside her, and nothing she could ask would have seemed to Lucia too much for her to give.

The marchioness then turned to her husband, and obtained from him a pledge to provide suitably for Lucia, that she might not be a loser by complying with her wishes.

The marquis readily acceded to this request; and then her spirit ascended to heaven, leaving stricken and desolate hearts to mourn her irreparable loss. The grief of her son was so excessive, that his father thought it expedient for him to travel, and Count Vittorio set out to make the tour of Europe, which was only needed to complete the accomplished education he had received.

At the death of her benefactress, Lucia was sixteen, and she remained at the castle, contented with the monotonous routine of her life; for she had never known excitement, and the tenor of her innocent existence had been so even that she knew not the name of *envy*. She watched over the marquis, tended the flowers, practised her music, and visited the poor as the almoner of her protector; for he went forth no more among his people after the pall of death spread its darkness over his house.

In losing his wife, the marquis had lost all that brightened his existence; and the only pleasure he now enjoyed was found in listening to the sweet voice of Lucia, uttering such notes as he fancied might be heard in the Paradise to which his best beloved had gone.

Occupied with other thoughts, he scarcely noted the rare beauty into which the young orphan had developed. Insensible to her charms himself, he gave no thought to the effect she might produce upon his son, when, after two years of absence, he returned to his native home.

Count Vittorio was dazzled, bewildered, and enchanted by the vision of loveliness that welcomed him to the castle, and he freely confessed that in all his travels he had seen no one to compare with the humble waif taken from a peasant's cottage by his mother, and educated as her own daughter.

Vittorio, too, had greatly improved. The air of a polished courtier set off his natural graces, and the young and inexperienced child of nature, who offered him her hand with shy grace, thought him the most elegant and attractive being the world could produce.

Day by day the impression thus made in the first moment of meeting deepened, till a passion as warm and true as human hearts may feel was mutually inspired. Yet both shrank from its avowal—the count, from the conviction that his father would never consent to his union with this obscure and doorless girl; and Lucia, from the dread that if their infatuation became known to the marquis, he in whose presence she only lived might be banished from his home, or herself be sent away in disgrace.

Such was the position of affairs at Colonna Castle at the opening of our story.

With an expression of weariness, the marquis closed his book, and rang a small silver bell that stood upon a table beside him.

It was answered by a lad dressed in a livery of crimson and gold, which harmonized with his dark complexion and brilliant black eyes.

"Inform the senorina that I wish to have some music."

The boy's eyes flashed mysteriously, and he replied:

"Yes, my lord, I will do so, so soon as she returns to the castle."

The old man turned on him with an expression of surprise.

"Whither has Lucia gone? She knows that at this hour I always desire to hear her sing."

"Oh, my lord, she is not very far off, and I can soon let her know that you are waiting, if you command me to do so; but I don't think she will thank me for interrupting her just now."

"Why, what can you mean, sirrah? Have a care how you speak of this young girl; remember that she is a *protégée* of mine, and bridle your tongue accordingly. Where is Lucia? and what do you mean by your insinuations? I insist on knowing."

The boy began to look frightened. He stammered: "I—I really meant nothing, my lord. I—I only thought that when Count Vittorio honours a young maiden like her with his company, she will not be likely to leave him willingly. That's all I was thinking of, my lord."

A sudden flash from the deep-set eyes of the old man, lurid as that which precedes the thunder-clap, caused the rash speaker to shrink within himself. But, in a moment, he controlled his anger, though his firmly compressed lips showed with what effort this was done. He quietly said:

"Go, Julio, and do my errand, and remember that chattering tongues are sometimes clipped. My son and Lucia have been reared as children of the same house, and there is nothing wrong or unusual in their holding converse with each other. Go, I say, and command her to come hither."

With flushed cheeks, and crestfallen air, the boy was leaving the room, when he suddenly turned, and, in a deprecating tone, said:

"My lord, I am the bearer of a message to you which I was near forgetting. Senor Baldoni is here, and he bade me say to you that he will be very grateful if you will grant him a few moments in private, as he has something important to say to you."

The marquis made an impatient gesture.

"Baldoni knows that this hour is sacred to other things, and I never transact business in the evening. Bid him wait till the morning."

"If you please, my lord, he seemed troubled and very anxious. I don't believe it is about common business that he comes."

After a pause, the marquis slowly said:

"Bid him come in, then."

As the boy disappeared, he muttered:

"Some trouble about his daughter, I suppose. Pepita is a headstrong girl, and requires a strong curb to keep her in the right path. As the adopted child of my lost angel, I must take some interest in her; but my advice to her father will be to marry her off as speedily as may be to some good man who will keep a tight rein on her."

"Well, Baldoni, what can you have to say to me that is so urgent that you must ask for an interview at an hour which you well know is devoted to repose and meditation?"

The last words were addressed to a small, slightly made man, of middle age, who respectfully removed his hat when he entered the apartment, and made a low obeisance before his employer.

His dress was scrupulously neat, and as he bowed before the lord of the manor, there was an air of self-respect in his greeting which betrayed the estimate he placed upon himself.

Senor Baldoni was the manager of the Colonna estate, and his employer had implicit confidence in his integrity; though the increased expenditure of his family, and the state in which he kept his only child, evinced that he had not neglected his own interests while attending to those of his master.

Pepita had been reared and educated as a lady; and it was whispered among the people on the estate that she had lifted her eyes to the young count himself, and endeavoured to win favour in his sight. It was also known to all around that the ambition of the steward for his handsome daughter soared much higher than to bestow her hand on one of her own station.

Baldoni advanced till he stood within a few feet of the marquis, and then said:

"Excuse me, my lord—I fear that you may accuse me of meddling in what does not concern me; but a discovery I have unexpectedly made I consider it my duty to reveal to you. I trust that you will not think me too officious, and I hope that you will stand between me and the anger of the count when he hears what I have done. I feel bound to enlighten you as to—to—"

He paused, as if uncertain how to proceed, and the marquis impatiently said:

"What is the use of all this circumlocution? If there is anything I ought to know, speak out like a man. What has my son been doing? Of course I shall protect an old and valued servant like yourself against any outbreaks of his anger. Go on, I say, and let me hear what you have to tell."

But Baldoni still seemed to hesitate, and after some further pressing, and much impatience on the part of the questioner, he was induced to say:

"My lord, has it never occurred to you that Lucia is very attractive? That—that—in short, is there not much danger that your son will forget his high station and brilliant prospects, for the sake of her pretty face? Excuse my boldness, my lord; but there is already much talk among the people about the way they are carrying on."

The irritated listener burst forth:

"What do you mean by beating about the bush in this absurd manner? Do you mean to say that my son is in love with Lucia, and she with him? But that is impossible. They are as brother and sister, and prying eyes are making gossip out of mere nothings. They spend hours with me every day, and I have seen no indications of love between them."

Baldoni drew still nearer, and lowered his voice:

"They are on their guard before you, my lord, because they fear detection and separation. But they are even now in the pavilion, talking over their future plans. I myself overheard enough to convince me that they are plighted lovers."

The listener's dark cheek flushed slightly, and he spoke with an accent of strong sarcasm:

"So you have condescended to gratify your curiosity by playing the part of an eavesdropper. It is not a very honourable position to place one's self in, and my son will scarcely thank you for your good offices. Will you be good enough to supply me with your motive for playing the spy on these young people?"

The steward was taken by surprise at this address; he had expected the Marquis to show extreme indignation at the discovery he came to make. He confusedly said:

"You misunderstand me, my lord. I have not played the part of the spy. By chance I passed near the pavilion, and overhearing voices, I paused behind the shrubbery to ascertain who was within. The few words that reached my ears convinced me that the count's attentions to Lucia were not of a fraternal character. I thought it best to warn you of what is going on, that the ambition of this young girl may be nipped in the bud."

"Thank you," replied the marquis, dryly. "I shall not forget how anxious you are that my son shall not make a *mal alliance*. We will speak no further on this subject, if you please. I fancied that you had come either to speak of your daughter, not of my protégée. What says Pepita to the offer of Santani? He is a fine young man, with a valuable vineyard in possession, and the prospect of some money from his father. The match will be a good one for her; and by my faith, I think you had better dispose of the wayward damsel as soon as may be."

A cloud passed over the steward's face; but he quickly replied:

"You are too good, my lord, to interest yourself in the affairs of my daughter; but she is not in favour of this marriage, and I cannot find it in my heart to oppose her inclinations. Pepita is my only child, and I cannot insist that she shall do what I know will make her unhappy."

"Well, well, you know your own affairs best; but Pepita will never have such another offer. Santani is a good man, and he has the spirit and firmness to break her will without breaking her heart. She is a wild falcon to tame, and it will require a tender and firm hand to do it well. If she will consent to marry Santani, I will bestow a dower upon her, and pay for the bridal *trousseau*."

"I thank you with all my heart, my lord; but it is of no use to urge this matter upon her. She has set her mind against Santani, and such a pretty girl as Pepita can never be at a loss for lovers."

"Yes, yes; she'll play with all, and end by taking the worst of the lot. But I have said all I have to say on that subject. Good evening, Baldoni; I wish to be alone. But before you go, I must warn you to say nothing of the discovery you think you have made. If my son has so far forgotten himself as to have some love passages with Lucia, I can soon set that right. One thing I wish to say to you is, that Count Vittorio is already betrothed to one in his own rank in life. Lady Venetia Amalfi is to become his wife; and the time draws near when the marriage can take place. A few days hence she leaves the convent in which she has been concealed, and then he will visit her and press his suit in person. Good evening."

He waved his hand in token of dismissal, and the steward, with a crestfallen expression, bowed low, and departed.

CHAPTER II

Doglia me reca nella core ardita.

Grief brings a daring spirit to my heart.
To aid my love, which is strong-based in truth.

Where art thou, Death? King Fortune, where art thou?
Why not let loose the miser's unspent heaps?
If done—then who is heir?
I know not: for a power encircles us
That writes our fate above.

LEFT alone, the marquis leaned his head upon his hand, and meditated deeply on the news he had heard. A dark cloud settled on his brow, and his firm lips as-

sumed an expression of iron firmness that did not bode well to the cause of the lovers. At intervals, he muttered:

"It shall not be—no, no. It shall not be. I have hoarded and saved, from year to year, to make him a fitting match for Venetia, and now an idle fancy threatens to overturn all my plans. The girl is pretty enough—there's no denying that; but she's no match for a Colonna. Besides, I cannot do without her services. I should die but for her care; no one else can be so agreeable to me as she is; yet I cannot claim her as my daughter-in-law. I must use my power deftly—must wield a hand of steel in a glove of velvet, or both may run restive. Softly—softly—here she comes."

The marquis sank back in his luxurious chair, and quietly turned his face toward the door as a young girl glided in with a light and swift motion, which was the perfection of grace.

She was slightly above the medium height, with a form rounded into exquisite proportions; a complexion of rosy fairness, which indicated perfect health; and an air of youth, vivacity, and strong vitality that was enchanting.

Her features were in harmony with her person—full of spirit and expression. Her dark brown eyes beamed with tenderness or mirth, according to the mood of the moment; and the flexible lips flashed into smiles or grew tremulous with emotion as the spirit within prompted.

Every passing feeling was mirrored in that clear face; but its predominating expression was one of purity and sweetness of nature.

A tender consolation had she been to the aged marquis during his years of desolation; but he now hardened his heart against her fascinations, though, as he curiously regarded her, he suddenly discovered how lovely she had grown; the more beautiful at this moment from the blissful dream that lay nestled in her heart; the rosier from the kisses love had left upon her cheeks and lips.

She advanced at once toward a fine harp that was placed in a recess between two of the windows, and, in an apologetic tone, said:

"I trust you will pardon me, my lord, but I have been walking with Count Vittorio; we stopped in the pavilion to arrange the flowers we had gathered, and I forgot how rapidly time was passing; till Jolio informed me that you were impatient at my delay. I had no idea that I had overstayed my usual hour."

The marquis blandly replied:

"There is no need of an apology, Lucia; Vittorio is as a brother to you, and I must expect that two young people will sometimes become so much occupied with each other, as to be oblivious for a season of an old valetudinarian like myself."

The emphasis on the word *brother* caused the rosy tint to fade from the cheeks of Lucia, and she glanced towards him with a rapidly beating heart; but his face was inscrutable. He had thrown himself in his favorite attitude, his head bowed upon his breast, and his eyes closed. The twilight, which now began to gather in the room, effectively screened him from minute observation, and Lucia silently placed herself before the harp.

A few moments put it in perfect tune, and a flood of harmony was poured through the darkening room. The voice—a clear, delicious soprano—arose in waves of melody; and for an hour she played and sang as if revelling in the enjoyment of the art in which she excelled.

She was playing for the marquis; but she knew that another listener lingered near the windows, who transpired every sound, and he alone could understand the undertone of joy and hope that thrilled through every note she uttered.

Never until this evening had Lucia felt truly how tenderly she was loved. The passionate Italian nature of Vittorio had awakened in her virgin heart a similar emotion, and she felt that life would be void if deprived of the light of his presence. For the first time, their love had found utterance in words; and in the blissful intoxication of the moment they had solemnly plighted themselves to each other, without a thought of the parental authority which had power to place a ban upon their union.

Both believed that the oath of mutual fidelity they had taken on a little gold cross which Lucia wore, was as binding upon them as the vows they would utter before the priest at some future day.

Little dreaming of the storm about to burst upon her head, the young girl sang on till the marquis again spoke.

"That is enough music for this evening, Lucia. Come here and sit beside me. I have something to say to you."

Her heart fluttered wildly, and then sank like lead in her bosom; yet she could not have explained why she was thus moved. She was often called to his side to prattle to him when he became wearied of

sweet sounds; but now she knew that there was a secret she dreaded he might discover, and she asked herself what would ensue if the marquis became aware of what had occurred that evening? Would he cast her off from his fostering protection? forbid his son to think of her? and leave her to her own resources? Yet, no!—his plighted promise to his lost wife stood in the way of that. But if he retained her at the castle, and banished his son, it would be little better for her; for at that moment she felt as if death would be preferable to a separation from her lover.

She crushed down the emotions that swelled in her bosom, and began, as was her usual custom, to give him the history of her evening walk. It was marvellous how much that under other circumstances would have been very uninteresting, she found to say on so simple a topic. When she at last ceased speaking, the old man took her hand in his own, and gravely asked:

"Have you told me all, Lucia? Is there not something of the deepest interest to you that you have kept back from me? Answer truly, my child."

The sudden fluttering of the little hand he firmly clasped was sufficient answer for so astute a man as the marquis; but he bent his head as if listening for her next words, and the poor girl said in a fainting voice:

"What more should there be to tell, my lord? You have never questioned me thus before."

"Because I implicitly trusted you, Lucia. Look into your own heart, and see if that trust has not been repaid with falsehood and ingratitude."

A faint cry burst from her lips, and she impulsively snatched her hand from his grasp. Veiling her face with it, she faltered:

"Oh, my lord, this is a terrible accusation to bring against me."

"Have you not deserved it, Lucia?" asked the marquis, in the most paternal of tones. "Tell me what lately passed in the summer-house between yourself and Count Vittorio. It will not avail you to practise any subterfuge, for I already know enough to conjecture the nature of the interview."

In the agitation of that moment, Lucia felt as if life was ebbing from her frame. A mortal paleness overspread her features, and she faintly gasped:

"Ah! we have been betrayed. Some treacherous tongue has poisoned your mind against us. You are incensed that I should have lifted my eyes so far above my station; yet, oh, my lord, I could not help it; love came unawares, and—oh! I am very—very miserable!" and she burst into tears.

The marquis gravely said:

"It is true then, and my informant was not premature in coming to me with this pretty history. Child, are you betrothed to my son? Is there anything more serious between you than a few silly love-passages which you may in time both forget?"

"We shall never forget," she impulsively said. "Do not delude yourself with that belief, my lord; we shall love on to the end, whatever cruel sentence you may pronounce against us. You have the power to tear us asunder, to bid seas roll between us; but you can never control feelings; never fetter the beating heart which knows but one idol, and through all trials will remain true to it. Yes, Marquis of Colonna, I, humbly born, the creature of your bounty, I love your son even as you once loved her who has gone from among us. I will attempt no deception, for it is unworthy either him or myself."

She spoke with rapid and passionate utterance, as if fearful that her courage might fail her if she faltered in her confession. The allusion to his lost wife momentarily softened the marquis, and he felt how worthy this truthful and loving heart was to mate with his darling son; but pride and ambition again intervened, and he hardened his feelings against her anew. But his voice was kind and sympathetic, as he said:

"My dear Lucia, I do not wish to play the part of a tyrant either towards yourself or Vittorio; but you are both mere children, and incapable of judging what will be best for your future happiness. You are scarcely eighteen, and he is but twenty-two. At your time of life it is impossible that you can judge of what will most promote your future welfare. It is well for you that you have an experienced friend to show you kindly and truthfully how little promise of happiness there is in a union between you, even if such thing were possible."

Gentle as the tones of the marquis were, every word he uttered pierced as a sharp-edged dagger to the heart of the listener. She pleadingly said:

"If you will it, we should be supremely happy together; as happy as the angels in heaven are."

He gravely shook his head.

"We read that there has been discord even among them; and such a disproportioned alliance as this would be, must be productive of little else. Lucia, it becomes necessary for me to tell you that my son is not free to offer you his hand. From his boyhood he

has been the plighted husband of a noble lady of Palermo."

The young girl started up, her pale face suddenly flushing, her eyes flashing, her lips apart. After a violent struggle, she exclaimed:

"Betrothed to another! No, no, no! Say not that, my lord; do not seek to sully the untarnished honour of your son by asserting that he is pledged to another when he has sought and won my love. He could not be so base."

The marquis caught the hand of the excited girl, and again drew her down beside himself.

"Calm yourself, Lucia, and listen quietly to me. Count Vittorio is not aware of this engagement; but it is not the less binding upon him, for I have pledged his honour to its fulfilment. Mark me, Lucia, my son must become the wife of Lady Venetia Amalfi."

She gazed at him with dilated eyes, and presently asked:

"Why should he be held bound by a promise to which he was not a party? And why has this engagement been kept concealed from Vittorio?"

"I deemed it best to do so. The bride-elect was in a convent, receiving her education, and it was useless to speak on the subject till she was of proper age to become Vittorio's wife. I am under great obligations to her father, Count Amalfi, and it was his wish that our children should be betrothed. Lady Venetia will be a great heiress, and I have hoarded from year to year to render my younger son a fitting match for her in point of fortune. But if Vittorio refuses to redeem the pledges I have made in his name, I will bequeath all my savings to Count Angostina, and Vittorio may accept poverty as his heritage. Thus you see that, if you persist in holding him to the silly troth-plight that seems to have passed between you, you will blight his future, bring ruin upon him, and utter estrangement from me."

His voice had become hard and stern as his words; and Lucia, overwhelmed by this sudden blow, could only weep as if her heart were breaking.

There was a long silence, which was at last broken by the marquis saying:

"You see that you must give him up, Lucia. Lighten the struggle between him and myself by voluntarily resigning him yourself. I expect this sacrifice of you, as a return for all the kindness that has been lavished on you in this house."

She faintly said:

"Oh! I cannot—I dare not! He will suffer! He will accuse me of fickleness and falsehood. Since you will sever us, my lord, your own hand must strike the blow; mine is powerless against the man I love so tenderly that if he asked of me the sacrifice of life itself I would give it to him."

"Yet you refuse to save him from the evils which a marriage with you must surely entail. If Vittorio loves you well enough to abjure his rank, to dwell in privation and poverty for your sake, then go with him from this roof. But I will never see either of you again, nor will I endow him with a scudi of the wealth I have garnered for his sake."

He pushed her from him, arose, and was about to ring for lights to be brought in, when his hand was stayed by the appearance of a man at the open window. The intruder stepped over the low sill into the room, and rapidly approached the two.

(To be continued.)

SINGULAR CIRCUMSTANCE.—On Monday, as Mr. Stuart, banker, was driving from Swiney to Wick, the sudden brushing past of a bird attracted his attention, and he observed a large hawk closely following his vehicle, and eagerly watching the movements of a lark that had fled to the earth, hotly pursued by its enemy. The hawk did not venture to approach the vehicle so as to endanger its own safety, but the poor lark crouched near the wheel; and on Mr. Archibald Macallister, who was with Mr. Stuart, dismounting, the lark quietly allowed him to lay hold of it, preferring, we presume, the tender mercies of a man to those of a hawk.

IN A HURRY TO BE MARRIED.—Philip gave his daughter a dowry of 500,000 gold crowns, with many sumptuous jewels. The money was to be paid to the representative of his Christian Majesty on the day previous to the celebration of the marriage. In case the most serene Infanta became a widow, it was stipulated that she was to return to Spain in possession of her dowry, jewels, and wardrobe. The dower given by Louis XIII. was similar to that assigned from time immemorial to the queens-consort of France, and consisted of rich lands in Touraine and Le Pays Chartrain; the King also made gift absolutely to his future consort of all the jewels, and precious gauds and furniture, which she might accumulate during their union. The pecuniary settlements being thus made to the satisfaction of King Philip, the Infanta was saluted, and treated as Queen of France; a dignity

which her Highness accepted with marvellous dignity and gravity. When Mayenne took leave of her little Majesty, he requested that she would send some message to the King, her consort. "Give his Majesty assurance," promptly replied Donna Anna, "that I am very impatient to be with him. "Oh, madame!" interposed the Condé de Altamira, "what will the King of France think when he is informed by M. le Duc that you are in such a hurry to be married? Madame, I entreat you, show more maidenly reserve!" "Have you not always taught me to speak the truth, madame? I have spoken, and shall not retract," retorted the young Queen, pottishly. She then gave the ambassador her hand to kiss, slowly tendering it, as the Duke believed, that he might observe and report its symmetry and delicate hue.—"The Married Life of Anne of Austria." By Martha Walker Freer.

THE WIFE'S DEBT.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN LACY was head clerk in the business establishment of Whitmore and Co., in the large manufacturing town of Storchester. From the time John first entered Mr. Whitmore's counting-house, it had been his ambition to have a home of his own and a wife. For some years he had toiled on, living in dingy lodgings, and denying himself everything but the bare necessities of life, to save the money requisite for furnishing the long dreamt-of little mansion, and starting in life comfortably. His future wife's friends he knew could do nothing towards the expenses of their married life, for Emily Wilson was the only child of an old soldier, whose pension would die with him. She had received a good education from her mother, and was in a situation until such time as John could offer her a home of her own. Emily refused to be a burden upon her parents, whose narrow income barely sufficed for their own comfortable support.

And now John's dream was realized. A cozy little house was taken and furnished; a fortnight's holiday from the office was obtained, during which time Emily became Mrs. Lacy; a few days sojourn in the country, and then back to the little house at Storchester, which was henceforth to be their home.

Home! how John's heart thrilled at the word. Yes, he, too, now had a home; and more, he had the wife of his heart, for whom he had so long patiently waited and toiled.

John Lacy was eminently a man of method; and as soon as they were settled in their new home, he proceeded to lay before his wife his plans for regulating their household accounts. All bills were to be settled every quarter; and so, John said, they would know how they were going on. He then informed Emily that he wished her to have a certain annual sum for her own dress and expenditure; and he placed six pounds in her hands as her first quarter's instalment, cautioning her, with a smile, not to run into debt. Emily smiled, too; she did not think the caution much needed, as half the sum her husband allowed her generally covered her wardrobe expenditure, and like John, she had been carefully saving during the four years of their engagement, so as to provide, with a little assistance from her parents, a respectable outfit for her marriage.

Six months had passed happily away; the long winter evenings had seemed all too short to the happy pair, as they sat by their own fireside, all the more enjoyed for the occasional breaks in the form of evening visits to their friends; for they had a pleasant circle of acquaintance, all of whom considered it necessary to show their respect for the newly married pair by inviting them once, at least.

The spring was rapidly advancing, and Emily began to consider how she could lay out her scarcely touched allowance to the best advantage, in the purchase of a seasonable dress. She was pondering one morning on this all-important subject, when the door-bell rang, and her little maid-servant announced that a gentleman wished to speak with her.

"Show him in," said Emily; and a dark man made his appearance.

"I have taken the liberty of calling, madam," he began, "to inform you that I am now travelling with new spring goods of all descriptions—mostly French. They are of the latest style, and having imported them myself, I am enabled to offer them at a much lower price than you would usually purchase them in the shops. Will you permit me to show them to you?"

"Thank you," said Emily, "but I really do not know that I require anything."

"Only permit me to show you what I have," urged Mr. Dennis, for that was the stranger's name. "You need not purchase if you do not wish it, but I should like you to see the contents of my cases."

"There can be no harm in looking," thought Emily; and the man, seeing her hesitation, at once brought

in a large leather case from the entrance, where he had left it, and proceeded to exhibit sundry elegant dresses, shawls, mantles, and so forth.

"Remember, I have not promised to buy," said Emily, as she watched dress after dress unfolded and laid out on the chairs and tables.

"Oh, dear, no," said Mr. Dennis, blandly; "it is a pleasure to show them to a lady of your good taste; and," he added, speaking in a more confident tone, and moving nearer to Emily, "I take cast-off wardrobes; if you have any old dresses or shawls you have done with, I will give you their full value in exchange."

There was a fresh inducement to Emily, who had already begun to cast very admiring glances at a pretty spring silk, and a new style of shawl, which Mr. Dennis had displayed; they were both more expensive than she wished, but she knew she had two or three articles of apparel which she had already decided were hardly worth putting away for another winter, and she hoped that with the help of these she might bring the price of the much-coveted articles within her reach.

Her countenance fell when Mr. Dennis, after examining the well-worn dresses with a critical eye, mentioned a few shillings as the extent of their value; he hesitated, looked again at the shawl and dress, and at last consented to take five pounds and her old winter garments. It was more, by a great deal, than she had thought of allowing herself to spend on these two items; but then she considered they were a great deal handsomer than she could have got for the money at any of the shops.

In the evening Emily exhibited her purchases to her husband, who duly admired them.

"Paid for?" he asked, with a smile.

"Of course, dear John," was the ready reply; "they only cost me a part in money, for I exchanged some old dresses for them."

Somehow Emily did not like to name the real sum she had given for them, though it would have been well and wiser had she told the whole truth.

Six months more rolled on, and a little one was expected. Emily was very busy in her preparations. John made her a liberal present to provide for the coming of the little stranger, but Emily taxed her own purse to the utmost, to have everything very nice, as she considered.

The event was over, and Emily was rapidly recovering her usual strength and health. John, proud of his first-born, a fine boy, proposed that they should take advantage of his christening, and return their friends' hospitality, by inviting a party on the occasion. Emily agreed, and the invitations were duly issued.

A few days before the expected party, Emily was nursing her boy, and considering whether he was most like John or her own father, when the door was opened, and Mr. Dennis was introduced. He began by complimenting Emily on her looks, and the beauty of the child.

"May I ask his name?" said Mr. Dennis.

"We think of calling him John Edward, after his father and mine," replied Emily.

"Then he is not christened yet?" said Mr. Dennis.

"No," replied Emily; "it is to take place next Wednesday."

"Ah! then I am just in time; of course you will want a new dress," said Mr. Dennis.

"No," replied Emily; "I cannot possibly afford it just now; I shall wear my wedding dress in the evening."

"What! at the christening?" exclaimed Mr. Dennis. "Oh, pardon me, my dear lady, but that would not be good taste. Besides, the dress cannot have worn as well as the wearer; she may look as fresh as ever, but the dress must have lost its freshness by this time. Now, if you will only allow me to show you, I have the most lovely thing; just suitable—there!" he said, taking from its case a delicate rose-pink silk.

Emily could not restrain an expression of admiration, and she asked:

"What is the price?"

"Five pounds," replied Mr. Dennis; "but to you I will make it four pounds ten shillings; it is so exactly what will suit your complexion."

Emily knew this, and she sighed as she said:

"Totally impossible; I could not afford half that sum."

"Oh, I do not expect you to pay for it," said Mr. Dennis. Emily stared, and the man continued: "If it is not impertinent, what could you afford to give? You admire the dress so much, you really ought to have it."

Emily coloured as she replied, "I have only two pounds left of my quarter's allowance, and it will be two months before I have any more."

Emily felt that she was lowering herself in thus bandying words with the man; but she admired

the dress so much that she had not the resolution to say, firmly and at once, "No."

Mr. Dennis glanced at her for a moment, and then said, with a light laugh:

"And then you say you cannot afford it, when you have a regular allowance to do as you like with! My dear Mrs. Lacy, of course you will have the dress; and see (you will have it made low, I suppose,) you should have something to cover your neck, or you will be taking cold, and it will look in better taste for the occasion."

As he said this, Mr. Dennis produced a small black lace cloak, trimmed and tied with pink ribbons that exactly matched with the dress.

"Yes," said the shrewd trader: "and you will look most lovely in them; and as to the price, that is the last consideration—they are only six pounds five shillings both together; and to a lady like you I could never think of making any difficulty. If you like to pay me three or four pounds on account, you can do so; as for the rest, twenty years hence will suit me, or you can pay me two pounds at a time if you like; you will never know how they cost you anything then."

Emily listened to the tempting voice, and yielded. She paid a few pounds down, and took the dress and cloak.

Mr. Dennis began to close his cases; and while so doing, he inquired if Emily had a suitable dress-maker.

"I ask the question, madam," he said, "because you know that dress should be made well, and I have a friend who makes for a very few ladies, just one or two, I have mentioned to her; she certainly works and fits exquisitely, and if you would allow me, I will mention you to her. She works chiefly for amusement, so that her terms are really absurdly low; I should imagine they will not pay her for the materials."

Once more Emily was persuaded; she told Mr. Dennis she would see his friend the next day; and the next day, accordingly, Mrs. Jacobs made her appearance.

Mrs. Jacobs took Emily's measure with professional rapidity, complimented her on her figure, and her taste in the selection of the dress, and departed, promising the dress in time for the party. It came; it fitted admirably, but Emily felt rather appalled at handsome black lace with which it was profusely trimmed.

"What would John say?" thought Emily, "should he suspect anything?"

So much had Emily dreaded her husband's questions, that she had not yet even mentioned her purchase. However, the day came, and summoning all her courage, she said, in a careless tone:

"John, dear, I bought myself a new dress for the party to-night."

"Very well, my love," said her husband; "I do not doubt you will look very nice."

John said no more; and even when the pink silk was on, he only remarked that his Emily, somehow, always looked nicer than other women.

Emily's heart misgave her at these kind, loving words; but even then she had not the courage to speak out, and tell him the error her vanity had led her into.

Alas! this was only the beginning of her sorrows.

About a month after these events, Emily's mother died.

It was her first great grief; and, though her husband's affectionate sympathy softened the blow, it fell heavily.

Six months more, and Emily's heart beat nervously every time the door-bell rang.

If Mr. Dennis should want his money, what could she do?

At last he came!

Although John had made Emily a present, mourning is very expensive. Consequently, her purse was very light; two pounds were all she had saved toward liquidating her debt.

She began to explain this to Mr. Dennis, who immediately stopped her.

"My dear lady," said he, "why make needless apologies? I told you to pay me two pounds at a time, if it suited you so to do; and you offer me two pounds. But see here—I have a lovely black silk for you."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Emily; "I must not buy anything more to-day; indeed, I shall not," she added, firmly.

"I beg your pardon, I must have misunderstood you, then," said Mr. Dennis; "you wish to close your account with me; I shall have to trouble you for two pounds five shillings more in that case. My bill against you is four pounds five shillings."

"But," stammered Emily, "I thought I was to pay you as I could."

"Certainly, if you continue to deal with me," said Mr. Dennis; "but now if you get your dresses else-

where—buy of to settle changing, but not quite take the Why, worth done." Emily being like Sh like, I year in Emily felt she contrad Jacob's to the on she was for And so Mr. Dennis the uncles of etc. to satisfy made for owing, I at her cr Poor I Her health and could have reckoning, One face and face. "Mr. V "Will I can made in was a sub He was and with steadiness to his "Never wife; gives me, meanwhile for debts?" Emily s her, when do not "I must two," said quite finish. Emily w A pain her spirit. The hon employer her approached for his step Two hon Emily tried to the door "What asked; but failed. She had the little parlour John car packet of p into Emily's "What d Emily op Dennis for and a half, old shilling lands. On wife destroyed that some m "Look at me how the The next the others w given her the appropriated "Now, te

where—you must have dresses; and if you do not buy of me, you must of some one else—it is only fair to settle one account before you begin another." Then changing his tone, which had been somewhat threatening, he added in a coaxing voice, "Come, we must not quarrel so soon. I do not want to trouble you; take the dress; I shall never ask you for the money. Why, bless me, many ladies take twenty pounds worth of dresses, and do not offer me what you have done."

Emily took the black silk, and a handsome mourning shawl besides.

"Shall I send Mrs. Jacobs for the dress? or, if you like, I will take it to her," said Mr. Dennis; "she has year measure."

Emily agreed; indeed, she dared not refuse. She felt she was in Mr. Dennis' power, and she feared to contradict him; even when her dress came from Mrs. Jacobs, and she found that it was a very inferior silk to the one Mr. Dennis had chosen and shown to her, but she was silent. She could not appeal to her husband, for then she must have told her own folly and deceit. And so for the next two or three years it went on. Mr. Dennis called regularly, and coaxed or threatened the unhappy wife into taking the most expensive articles of every description. In vain Emily struggled to free herself, but she only sank deeper into the mire, for at last she applied the money intrusted to her by her husband for the purpose of paying household bills, to satisfy the demands Mr. Dennis now frequently made for a few pounds on account. What was really owing, Emily at last did not know, but was completely at her creditor's mercy.

Poor Emily!

Her distress was great, and it told both on her health and temper; her husband often wondered what could have changed her so much; but the day of reckoning was at hand.

CHAPTER II.

One evening John returned home with a grave, sad face. Emily anxiously inquired the cause.

"Mr. Whitmore is dead," was the reply.

"Will that affect you, John?" asked Emily.

"I cannot tell yet," was the reply; "but I fear it may."

And so the event proved. Many alterations were made in the arrangements, and among them John was a sufferer.

He was summoned to the house of Mr. Blakely; and with many compliments on his industry and steadiness, he received a handsome present, in addition to his salary, and his dismissal.

"Never mind, Emily," said John, cheerily to his wife; "with the handsome character Mr. Blakely gives me, I am sure to get employment again soon; meanwhile, I have saved enough to carry us on comfortably for the present. Thank God, we have no debts!"

Emily shrank, as though her husband had struck her, when she heard his last words. What should she do now?

"I must go back to the office for another day or two," said John, the next morning. "I have not quite finished everything yet, as I should like to leave it."

Emily watched him depart.

A painful feeling of coming sorrow weighed upon her spirits.

The hours dragged slowly along; she could not employ herself; and when the hour for John's return approached, she listened, with a feeling akin to agony, for his step, but he came not.

Two hours later than his usual time he returned. Emily tried to shake off her nervous dread, and went to the door to meet him.

"What makes you so late?" she would have asked; but at the first glance at John's face her voice failed.

She had never seen him look as he now did, and she turned and followed him, trembling, into the cosy little parlour.

John carefully closed the door; then, drawing a packet of papers from his coat pocket, he put them into Emily's hand, saying, in a hoarse voice:

"What do these mean?"

Emily opened the first; it was a bill from Mr. Dennis for goods supplied during the last three years and a half, one hundred and fifteen pounds and some odd shillings! The paper fell from her trembling hands. One glance at the pale, terrified face of his wife destroyed the last faint hope John had cherished, that some mistake had been made in the name.

"Look at them all," he said, bitterly, "and then tell me how they are to be paid."

The next was Mrs. Jacob's account, fifteen pounds; the others were trades-people's bills, which John had given her the money to pay, and which money she had appropriated.

"Now, tell me the truth," said John. "How has

all this happened? and how much more money do you owe?"

"This is all," said the miserable Emily; and then, with many tears and sobs, she told the whole tale of her folly and deceit, and implored her husband's forgiveness.

"I forgive you, Emily," said her husband; "but you have brought a heavy punishment upon me as well as yourself. These bills came in this morning; at first I would not believe them; but I was soon obliged to do so. I have since been consulting your father, and we have agreed upon what we consider the wisest plan; indeed, I may say, the only course open to me. This morning Mr. Blakely offered me an appointment abroad, in one of their foreign houses. I at first intended to refuse; but now I have no choice, and I have accepted it. I cannot possibly take you and the boy; so you and he must go to your father, who has consented to take charge of you. This house must, of course, be given up; the furniture must be sold; and this, with what I have saved, will just pay those debts and my travelling expenses, and leave a small sum in your father's hands for the extra expense you will cause him. But remember," he added, sternly, "I can pay no more of your debts."

"How long shall you be away, John?" asked Emily, amid her tears.

"I cannot say," was John's reply. And his own voice shook as he said:

"If I find it possible to make a home for you and the boy, I will send for you as soon as I can afford to pay the expense of your journey; at present it is impossible."

A month from that time found Emily and her child domiciled with the old soldier.

The little home was gone; the pretty furniture, bought with such loving pride, and paid for with the hard-earned savings of many years, had been dispersed among strangers; and John was on his sad and lonely way to a foreign land.

CHAPTER III.

Four years had passed away, and Emily sat alone in a comfortless little room in a dingy house, which bore on its front window a card, "Apartments." She looked thin and old; for these four years had been full of deep, bitter sorrow to her. A few months after her husband's departure, her father was struck with paralysis, which left him feeble as a child, and fretful in the extreme.

Emily was obliged to engage the services of a young girl to look after her little boy, while she attended to the many wants of her suffering parent, her narrow means not enabling her to engage a more efficient assistant.

One day, Emily had sent her child out as usual, under the care of this girl, and was busily employed about her own duties, when an unusual noise and crowd in the street attracted her attention.

They stopped before her own door; and in a few minutes the blood froze in her veins at the sight of her lovely boy, borne in the arms of a kind-hearted man, a mangled corpse.

His careless nurse had stopped before a shop-window, regardless of a rapidly advancing carriage, the horses of which had evidently escaped from the control of their driver.

In a moment, the little one had been knocked down and trampled to death!

A passer-by picked him up; and, learning who he was from the frightened girl, carried him home to his distracted mother.

The old soldier lingered some time after the little one's death, but at last he died; and Emily was left alone. The loss of her father's pension obliged Emily to give up the little house in which she had lived, and to seek for lodgings suited to her scanty purse. With some difficulty she met with what she required, and removed her few articles of furniture.

Emily was sitting alone in her little room, considering what would be the best course for her to pursue. She thought of all her past life, of her happiness the first year she was married, and all her subsequent folly, and the misery it had brought; then she thought of her child; and here memory became almost too painful. She covered her face with her hands, and the tears streamed fast down her cheeks. She had written to her husband after her father's death, but had received no answer; and in her misery she thought perhaps he, too, was dead—another victim of her misconduct.

Emily's melancholy reverie was here interrupted by her landlady, who, suddenly opening the door, said:

"A gentleman, ma'am, wants to speak with you."

Emily started up. A tall man had entered the room, and stood gazing fondly and anxiously at her. She looked again; surely—could she be so mistaken in the evening gloom?

"Emily, my wife!" said he.

It was John; and the next moment Emily was weeping tears of joy in her husband's arms.

"You will not leave me again, John?" she sobbed.

"Never, my darling, I hope," he replied; "I was preparing to come when I received your letter."

"Have you lost your appointment, then?" asked Emily.

"I have given it up," he replied. "Emily, I am a rich man."

"A rich man!" repeated Emily.

"Yes, my dear, a rich man," said John, as she stared at him with astonishment. "You may look," he added; "but it is true. Do you remember, Emily, I told you that I lodged with an old Mr. Blenkinst? Well, he took a great fancy to me; and when he died, having no relations—at least none that he ever acknowledged—he left all his property to me. I had always believed him to be poor; but I discovered, to my surprise, that he was worth nearly a hundred thousand pounds. The first thing now to be done is to seek for a comfortable home, which we can once more call our own."

"John," said Emily, timidly, "can you ever trust me again?"

"Yes, my darling, fully and entirely," he replied. "Otherwise we should have little happiness."

"Then, John, will you please not give me an allowance," said Emily. "I would rather ask you when I want anything, and then I shall not be so easily tempted to do wrong."

"Very well, my dear; just as you please," said John.

Emily never again gave her husband cause to regret his confidence in her. Even had she been disposed to err, the sight of her recollection of that little green mound, with its simple white headstone, would have arrested her steps, by bringing to her mind the memory of those four sad years, during which she had felt so bitterly the consequences of her first debt.

C. R.

HOW NEAR TO THE PRECIPICE?

A RICH man wanted to hire a coachman, some skilful driver who could manage a pair of spirited horses.

At the hour he appointed, four men came to try and get the place. Turning to the one nearest him, he said:

"How near can you drive to a precipice and not go over it?"

"Oh," answered the man, "I can go within three feet of it."

The second man said:

"Sure, and I can go within two feet of the bank."

But whilst he was speaking, a strong man, with a brawny arm, lifted his head and said:

"Indeed, I have been six inches from the very edge and drove away safe."

The gentleman turned to the only man who had not yet spoken—a small, mild-looking man, whom the others thought would never be in their way. To him he said:

"I suppose you can go no nearer than that?"

"No, sir!" answered he, with determination; "it is my rule to keep as far from danger as possible."

"You are the man for me," said the gentleman; "I do not wish to hire any one to see how near he can drive my family to destruction."

FRANCE AS IT WAS.—At the accession of Louis XIII. to the crown of France, A. D. 1610, France had not a single ship. Paris at that period contained less than 300,000 inhabitants, and only four public edifices of note; the other cities of the kingdom resembled poor villages. The nobility, who almost all resided in the country, lived in donjons, or castles, surrounded with deep ditches. The peasants who cultivated the land were greatly oppressed. The high roads were almost impassable; the towns were destitute of police, and almost without any kind of government. For the space of nearly 1,000 years was the genius, not only of the inhabitants of France, but almost of all Europe, restrained under a Gothic thraldom, destitute of laws or fixed customs, and unacquainted with almost everything but war and idleness. The clergy of these times lived in disorder and ignorance, and the common people without industry, stupefied by their wretchedness.

FIRING AT THE CROWN PRINCE AND KING OF PRUSSIA.—Strange occurrences in military life are on the increase in Prussia. A few weeks ago, at a review near Stettin, in the presence of the Crown Prince, some rifle balls came whizzing in unpleasant proximity to the persons of His Royal Highness. The inquiry set on foot for the purpose of ascertaining who were the men in the ranks that had used ball cartridge elicited nothing? Even when the Batt. was ordered, as a measure of intimidation, to encamp a whole night without tents, fuel, and even overcoats, on the bleak

Baltic coast, the culprits were not denounced. The occurrence is said to have given rise to no little uneasiness at Court. It must be remembered that the Prussian army is composed of all stations of life—citizens, peasants, working men, *servants*, students, *employees*, and so forth. With a few exceptions, all classes are liable to military service; hence, the Prussian army contains a strong mixture of soldiers in whom civic sentiments have taken root. It will be easily understood that facts of the nature above narrated acquire additional importance when we keep this character of the military organisation of Prussia in view. Now another and even more striking occurrence is reported from Berlin. It is one on which the Prussian journals are still mute; but the German press in general contains detailed correspondence on the subject. It is stated that at the recent manoeuvres at Berlin, a ball from the ranks of a battalion of Fusiliers passed close by the king. An inquiry has been instituted; but, as we learn, as yet without any result. The *Neue Frankfurter Zeitung*, which has a letter on the subject from the pen of a correspondent who is well-known in Germany for the general correctness of his information, calls upon the official Prussian journals to give a contradiction to the statement. The Prussian Government press has, however, carefully avoided doing so. All Berlin, in fact, speaks of the report, and it is universally assumed to be true. These occurrences are not merely significant on account of the attempts themselves, but mainly because the authorities find it impossible to detect the would-be perpetrators. There must be some *esprit de corps*, in an anti-Royalist sense, in some of those regiments from which the balls were discharged in the direction of the princely personages. No wonder the repetition of the attempt has created a deep impression at Court.

THE DIAMOND-SEEKER.

CHAPTER VII THE COUNT ENTERTAINED.

The assurances Senhor Dos Montes had given the false Count de Paos, that he should find Nona agreeable when he came to dine with them the next day, had kept the secretary in unusually good spirits. He had been so uniformly successful in all his operations, from the hour of his assumption of the name and station of the unfortunate nobleman, that he deemed it reasonable to look forward to the complete success of his wooing.

The middle of the following afternoon found him dressing for the dinner to which he had been invited, and great and extraordinary were the pains he took to present himself to the best advantage. Washing and dyeing, shaving and curling, powdering and painting, with as much care and ceremony as an old dowager, he consumed at least two full hours in preparing himself to take the heart of Nona Dos Montes by storm.

"After all," he thought, as he stood half-dressed before a long mirror which reflected his face and form distinctly, "I am not so bad-looking, for a man of my age. A score of purring old maids about the court have told me that I am actually fine-looking. True, I am a little grey on the foretop, and at the roots of my beard, but a drop or two of dye remedies all that. Nona Dos Montes really ought to feel flattered."

Thus communing with himself, he dressed, ordered his carriage, footmen, &c., surrounding himself with all the pomp of his social and official positions, and drove slowly, as became a grand senhor, towards the residence of the planter. The latter received his distinguished visitor with an air and manner which caused him to appear at least ten years younger than on the preceding day. The secret of this unusual juvenility and elasticity found expression in the very first words he uttered.

"Congratulate me, my dear count," he exclaimed, as he led the way to the drawing-room. "I have been talking with my daughter, and—really, you must excuse my delight—I know not how to express my joy. Permit me to embrace you as my son!"

The feeble smile the count had called up to his face perceptibly deepened.

"Ah! she has become agreeable, then, as you promised?" he inquired.

"As pleasant as an angel. My surprise is equalled only by my rapture."

Forgetting all about his gouty extremities, in his joyful emotions, the planter precipitated himself upon the count, and held him for a moment in a close embrace.

"The clouds are all clearing away from our path," Dos Montes continued, "and everything is becoming as pleasant as—as a garden of roses. Let us take a glass of something, my dear count, to whet our appetites for dinner."

He produced a bottle of the oldest and rarest wine his vaults afforded, and the two men joined each other in a social glass, expressing a mutual sentiment of satisfaction and approbation. The planter hastened to add:

"Yes, Nona has made up her mind to treat you with that consideration you so richly deserve, my dear count, and to accept the affections and honours you are desirous of bestowing upon her. She looks like an angel in my sight, now that she has promised to be sociable and agreeable during the hours you honour us with your presence. After all, when we reflect upon the matter, it was natural enough for her to be shy and reserved until after she had seen something of you, and formed a correct estimate of your worth."

At this same instant, a white-headed negro appeared, and announced dinner.

"True. I had forgotten everything in the delightful circumstances mentioned. Come, my dear count," said Dos Montes, leading the way to the dining-room, where Nona was awaiting them, with the planter's maiden sister and housekeeper; "the field is won!"

With this assuring observation, Dos Montes presented himself to the notice of the ladies, with his intended son-in-law at his heels.

Nona received her father with a smile he had not seen on her face for many a day; and she recognized the count with such additional sweetness and grace, that the delighted planter audibly ejaculated:

"Charming! charming!"

"Yes, an exceedingly pleasant day," rejoined the elderly maiden lady, with vague glances around her, not knowing from what source the admiring adjective proceeded, so unlike itself was her brother's voice, in the enthusiasm of the moment. "I trust the weather will not change."

With these sage observations, she took her accustomed seat at the foot of the table, opposite her brother, and from time to time offered a few feeble suggestions respecting the food, the servants, and her poultry, the principal sciences of which she was the mistress. Dos Montes had seated the count on his right hand, and Nona on his left, where he could witness the phases of their wooing.

"I am rejoiced to see you in such excellent spirits, fair Nona," remarked the count, with his most courtly bow. "May I not hope that the light and beauty you are now shedding around you will illuminate my pathway for ever?"

"Capital, capital!" exclaimed Dos Montes, without waiting for Nona's answer. "Pathway for ever! Just the thing for a woman's heart, my dear count. I see you understand these matters. Here, Pablo," he added, addressing his favourite slave, "bring me the wine I addressed for this occasion—those three bottles."

"Wine to begin with!" ejaculated the maiden sister, elevating her eyebrows.

"Certainly, my sister; wine before dinner, after dinner, and all the time, on such a day of rejoicing as this!"

The brilliancy of Nona's beauty, the number of her smiles, the ease and grace of her observations, and all the characteristics of her deportment, left the count and her father but little thought for their dinners. It would have been hard to recognize under her present gaiety the serious Nona of the previous day. In the course of a few moments she was conversing as sociably with the count as if he had been an intimate friend for years. The delight of her father at this conduct cannot be described. He forgot to eat, forgot to answer when spoken to. In a word, he became oblivious to everything but the prime ministership, and the various happy circumstances upon which that great happiness was depending.

"Oh, if I might feel that these smiles, these sweet tones, will evermore bless me!" whispered the count across the table. "I have no terms in which to tell you how I am charmed and delighted!"

"Indeed!" responded Nona, with a singular smile—yet one that completed the mental intoxication of the count. "You value me too highly altogether!"

"Capital! glorious!" exclaimed Dos Montes, again filling the count's wine-glass and his own. "I am proud and happy to hear these flashes of wit and sentiment! I haven't felt so much like a man of family for more than ten years!"

The stern look of authority with which he had of late invariably regarded Nona had now given place to a look of beaming admiration and approval. As to the count, he was almost as much overjoyed as the planter.

"I beg leave to assure you, my dear Nona," he observed, "that I fully appreciate your self-sacrifice in obeying the wishes of your father, in regard to the reception of my addresses!"

Nona bowed, and immediately inquired if he would not have a piece of roast chicken.

"Thank you," he responded. "As I was about to observe, I never knew how to appreciate the nobleness of your character until now."

"Indeed! Permit me to help you to some more gravy," was her reply.

"Charming!" again ejaculated Dos Montes, too obtuse to notice that Nona was purposely sandwiching the high-flown sentimentalities of the count between the common-places of dinner-table courtesy. "A charming girl, count, if I do say it! I am glad to see you, my children, in such a fair way to appreciate each other!"

He had already partaken of so much wine, in his joyous excitement, that the room appeared full of prime ministers, emperors, and angelic ladies of the court, chief among whom was his own beautiful daughter.

"A glass to Nona, my dear count!" cried Dos Montes, as he mistook his guest's thoughtful silence for the bashfulness of the tender passion. "We must do her honour!"

"With all my heart," was the response, and each uttered a wordy and high-sounding sentiment, which the fair girl acknowledged with a stately bow.

We need not linger upon the scene presented at the dinner-table, nor upon that which followed the bounteous repast, when the planter and his daughter, the latter escorted by the count, proceeded to the drawing-room.

The general effect of the occasion had been pleasant to everybody but Nona.

"At last all goes well," observed Dos Montes, as he looked from one to the other. "How this dinner has brought us together in the bonds of affection. Permit me, my dear count, to again welcome you to my house as my son."

He bowed a number of times, with all the politeness of which he was capable, to the now pillar of his house, and—for the first time for years—embraced and kissed Nona.

"All is now arranged upon a sure basis," he continued, with a look of satisfaction. "The wedding shall take place at any day you may appoint, but the earlier the better. As young hearts are better company than old heads, my dear count, I will leave you and Nona to discuss all these affairs, while I take a turn in the garden. Be happy, my children, and receive a father's blessing."

"But it is possible!" began the count, with an uneasy air, not liking the expressions which succeeded one another on Nona's face—"perhaps—that is—"

"Have no fears," interrupted Dos Montes, with an attempt to look wise. "I comprehend all these things. It is natural for you to approach the subject with some anxiety and timidity, but all will be well. Let me know, Nona," and he gave her a warning look, "if you and the count cannot arrive at a pleasant understanding without the assistance of any third party."

Again caressing his daughter, and bowing repeatedly to the count, the planter retired from the drawing-room.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COUNT ASTONISHED.

The change which came over Nona after her father's departure was so instantaneous and decided, that the count was almost startled by it. The assumed smile vanished from her face, and her manner became as serious as that of a judge on the bench. The friendly familiarity of her conversation and deportment gave place to an ominous reserve, and the changeable glances she had so recently bestowed upon her companion were succeeded by a searching and half-scornful gaze.

"Now that my father is gone," were her first words, "I have a few observations to make to you in all frankness. You have heretofore been assured, Count de Paos, on several occasions, that I can never be your wife; and I now desire to repeat the assurance in such terms, and under such circumstances, that you cannot have the least doubt in regard to my views and wishes."

The emotions of the false count, while listening to these words, bordered upon delirium,—surprise, rage, revenge, and all the worst characteristics of his nature being called into play by them.

"What! has all this complaisance been assumed?" he finally exclaimed, with the air of a man about evenly balanced between love and hate. "Have I really been taking part in a farce or a comedy, and nothing more?"

He started to his feet, and commenced pacing to and fro.

"I comprehend you," he observed, after a brief pause. "I am cleverly punished for my presumption."

"Exactly," she calmly replied. "My father insisted that I should dine with you to-day, and that I should appear as smiling and agreeable as possible; and I have endeavoured to comply with his wishes."

The count could have gnashed his teeth, in his

chagrin, had it not been that Nona's cold glances were upon him.

"What consideration is owing to a man who repeatedly forces himself upon the notice of a lady, I will not attempt to decide," Nona quietly proceeded. "I trust I have given you a lesson. I have had regard enough for your feelings to conceal my own in the presence of my father and others; but the time has come for you to know them. If you are the honourable man you have been pronounced, I appeal to you, Count de Paos, to persecute me no longer with your attentions. It is impossible for me ever to regard you with those sentiments with which a wife should regard her husband. For your own sake, as well as for mine, I must request you to receive these assurances as final!"

She uttered these words in a firm tone of voice, with a stately bow, and turned to leave the apartment.

The count threw himself at her feet, seizing her by the hand, in a paroxysm of conflicting emotions.

"Stay!" he exclaimed. "Surely you cannot be so cruel. Deign to retract these terrible words. Permit me to hope that you will revoke this decision—"

"It cannot be," Nona interrupted, with averted face, as she disengaged her hand. "Spare yourself this needless humiliation, Count de Paos. I cannot be your wife—never, never!"

He started to his feet, folding his arms, and gazed upon her with emotions she could not clearly define.

"As you suggest," he soon declared, in a deliberate voice, "I will spare myself the humiliation of further appeals. Your father has done me the honour to favour my suit, and to his hands—"

Nona interrupted him with an impatient gesture, while a look of scorn and loathing passed over her face.

"I had hoped," she said, in a cold and cutting voice, "that you would have honour and chivalry enough not to press a suit distasteful to me, under the cover of my father's authority. Do you wish me to understand that I was mistaken, and that you will persist in persecuting me, under his permission?"

Her clear eyes rested upon his face in such a searching way that he manifested a guilty consciousness of the despicable meanness which filled his heart.

"I look upon your present opposition to my suit," he replied, "as the result of a transient delusion, or as one of those foolish fancies which frequently turn the heads of young girls. I am fully convinced that your estimable parent will coincide with me in this view of the matter. Under these circumstances, I shall be compelled to regard your declarations as mere ravings, and to look to your father for such measures as will effectually convince you of your error!"

Nona had no language in which to express the scorn implied by these words.

"In a word," the count added, giving vent to his wrath and mortification, "that you may know my views in exchange for yours, let me assure you that I shall continue to regard you as my future wife. I never had so many inducements for persevering in my suit as now." And he smiled in his most malicious manner. "I have just learned how necessary you are to my security of mind!"

The real nature of the false count was so plainly betrayed in these few menacing words, that Nona recoiled from him in astonishment.

"Very well, senhor," was Nona's defiant response. "I have long thought you unworthy of the station you fill, and I now know it! I will not longer breathe the air polluted by your presence."

She turned away, with a look expressive of the loathing with which the unmanly conduct of the count had inspired her, and was passing from the apartment, when her father presented himself before her with a roar of perfect fury, and nearly choking with his rage and mortification. He had overheard the greater part of the preceding conversation, having quietly returned from the garden for that purpose, and would have burst in upon the couple long before the scene reached its culmination, had it not been for the violence of his emotions, which momentarily paralyzed him.

"To think, you ungrateful girl!" he exclaimed, as he caught her by the arm and shook her violently, "that you must destroy all my prospects by your insane obstinacy to my wishes! What do you mean? I'll lock you up in a lunatic asylum; I'll feed you on bread and water! Sit down here," and he thrust her into a chair, "and let us see what you have to say for yourself, eh?"

"I perceive that I am not wanted here," observed the count, blandly bowing to the planter, "and will accordingly take my leave!"

"Stay, count," exclaimed Dos Montes, with increased excitement. "I beg you not to leave us in displeasure, as much as my daughter's conduct merits blame. I assure you that she shall be brought to her

senses. Wait in the same noble patience with which you have listened to her senseless appeals."

"I leave the whole matter in your hands," responded the count, again bowing. "I am not in the least surprised or offended at your daughter's conduct—I am influenced solely by sentiments of affection and pity!"

"Noble and generous man!" exclaimed the planter. "Do you hear, girl? Do you realize the worth of the heart you are so madly rejecting? Drive up and see us frequently, count, and do not pay any attention to these foolish whims. Permit me to still look upon you as a son, and to confidently hope and expect that Nona will soon do your rank and station justice."

"Oh, I am not in the least offended," rejoined the count; "but I grieve for the melancholy error into which your daughter is being betrayed by some evil influence. I dare say a day or two will set matters to rights. Good day, fair Nona; good day, Senhor Dos Montes."

The count took his departure as politely and calmly as if nothing had occurred, but he left a scene behind him which beggars description, as he expected and intended. He had not driven out of the grounds in front of the house before Dos Montes broke out in a torrent of curses and lamentations, displaying more violence than Nona had ever before seen him exhibit.

"If the count were not the best man in the world," he finally concluded, "he would look with scorn upon you, after such an exhibition as you have made of yourself. I would have sooner lost one-half of my fortune than have such a scene happen. As the case stands, I am satisfied that fair means will fail to wean you from the infatuation under which you are labouring. The time has come for a different course of treatment!"

He took her sternly by the hand, with a lowering brow, and conducted her into a dark and narrow apartment in the interior of the mansion—which had been formerly used as a strong-room.

"I am sorry to resort to such means of bringing you to your senses," the planter remarked, as he thrust her into this place. "I shall keep you here until you express your penitence, and are ready to attend the Count de Paos to the marriage altar!"

Nona shuddered at her view of the prison-like apartment, as the thought occurred to her that her lover was liable to come in quest of her at any moment; but she had too much spirit to implore the planter's mercy, or to make concessions she could not keep.

"When you are convinced that you can obey my wishes," the planter observed, with a sullen wrath, "Nona had never before seen him exhibit, "I shall be glad to restore you to my favour. In the meantime, to convince you that I am terribly in earnest in the matter of your marriage with the Count de Paos, you shall have nothing to eat but bread and water until you say you will marry him!"

A pang of despair shot through Nona's heart as she listened to this stern declaration. Worse than any sufferings and persecutions she could herself endure at the hands of her tormentors, were the anxieties which began to press upon her concerning her lover.

"While I am shut up here," she thought, "perhaps Bertram will be killed by some hired assassin in the service of the count."

The planter locked the strong door, and then withdrew to his own apartments.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WIFE OF VALLOS.

A CLOW of wrath and mortification rested upon the face of the false Count de Paos as he rode homewards in his elegant carriage, from his dinner and interview with Dos Montes and his daughter. His residence, a handsome villa, in the style which prevails in the province of Rio Janeiro, was situated in the midst of large and luxuriant gardens and fields, in the outskirts of Petropolis, at quite a distance from any other dwelling. Here, in all the comfort wealth and official honours could command, the secretary lived alone, surrounded only by faithful servants. He had few dealings with the community around him, maintaining a haughty reserve towards all, and seldom visited or received company.

"I am in a fair way to lose the proud beauty," he muttered to himself, with a look in his eyes that was almost savage, as the carriage rolled up the broad avenue leading to the main entrance of his residence. "Cursed infatuation!" And he smote his breast with his clenched hand. "I would not for worlds have her know how much I love her! Her very scorn has strengthened my resolve to make her my wife, and I will stop at no crime that will forward my purpose!"

Alighting at the broad steps of the mansion, the secretary drew a key from his pocket, and entered the house. He had scarcely crossed the threshold, closing

the door behind him, when his quick ear caught the rustling of silk, and his eyes rested upon the form of a lady who suddenly presented herself in the doorway of the apartment, peering out upon him, in the dim light of the hall.

"Ah, who are you?" he demanded, advancing towards her; "what do you want?"

"I am your wife," was the instant reply, "and I want a few moments' conversation with you."

The face of the false Count de Paos became ghastly white as he recognized the woman, but it was only a moment before he had recovered his self-control. His self-possession rarely deserted him, and, now that he needed it the most, it did not fail to come to him.

"You must be mistaken, my good woman," he said, in a tone studiously polite. "I am the Count de Paos, secretary of his majesty, Don Pedro."

"That may all be, Joas," said the woman, coolly; "but you are also my husband!"

The false count moved towards a bell-pull, with the evident intention of having the lady ejected from the house by force, and said:

"I suppose, my good woman, that you are labouring under some strange hallucination. I am really afraid that you are insane! Will you leave my house peacefully, or must I have my servants put you out?"

"Come, come, Joas," said the lady. "You know me, and have played this farce long enough. If you need a reminder of the fact that you were once a mate of a ship, allow me to show you an anchor marked in India ink on your arm!"

As she spoke, the woman caught his hand, and rolled up his sleeve. The mark, of which she had spoken, was plainly visible a little above the wrist. The false count coloured and bit his lips as this evidence of his former life was displayed; but, recovering himself, said:

"Well, Mercedes, since I am fairly found out, how came you here, and what do you want?"

"What do I want?" she repeated, scornfully, as she drew her form to its utmost height, "I want justice!"

The false count laughed uneasily, and adjusted his sleeve, while he regarded her attentively. She was evidently a Portuguese peasant-woman, of about thirty-five years, and well-preserved, and having all the peculiarities of her race. A steady flush burned on her cheeks, and her coal black hair was combed smoothly over her ears, and altogether she presented an air of refinement and education above the sphere in which she had been born.

"Come up-stairs to my room, where we can talk, Mercedes," said her husband, in a conciliating tone.

The lady followed him up the wide staircase to a room over the apartment they had just left, and seated herself in silence, while her husband locked the door and drew a chair near her.

"Now tell me, Mercedes, how you happened to come over here, and how you found me out," he said, attempting to take her hand.

"When I received the letter which you had caused to be written, stating that you were dead, and enclosing your wages, I believed of course that it was true, and sincerely mourned your death, though heaven knows you were always a cruel husband, Joas," said his wife, resolutely refusing his hand. "I grew poorer and poorer every day, and at length accepted an offer to come to Bahia as nurse with the family of a nobleman. I remained with them until a year ago, when, finding myself again out of employment through the death of the child whose nurse I was, I resolved to come to Petropolis and find a similar situation. Soon after my arrival, I saw you seated in your splendid carriage and looking like an emperor. I started, but did not believe the evidence of my senses. Again and again I saw you, and each time was more clearly convinced of your resemblance to my husband, and at last, as I remembered your ready villainy—you need not look so angry, Joas—I began to believe it might be you. I did not get a situation here; on the contrary, I took a little cottage and have watched you a whole year, sometimes doubting and sometimes believing that you were my husband and had purposely deceived me in regard to your death. As I saw you riding out to-day, I resolved to come and see you to-night. I came, not knowing but I might be deceived; but the moment I heard you speak I knew you. How came you, Joas Vallos, with the title of Count de Paos? and how comes it that you hold the honourable post of secretary to an emperor?"

The false count had listened to his wife's long narration without a trace of feeling, except that his colour came and went, at first, as though he were struggling with his emotions. He now paused a moment before answering her question, and finally said:

"After my arrival here, Mercedes, I had the good fortune to render the emperor a service, and in return he bestowed upon me the title I bear and the post I fill. Of course, you see that you are not fitted to be the wife of a nobleman, or appear at court; so, in



[THE FALSE COUNT DE PAOS IMPLORING NONA TO MARRY HIM.]

mercy to you and myself, I caused that letter to be written!"

"Strange that your account varies so much from popular report, which says that Count de Paos came here with his daughter from Portugal," said Mrs. Vallos, drily. "Now, who was that daughter, and where is she? And as the name of the Count de Paos was on the list of the ship's passengers, while yours was down as mate—I ask you how this all happens, and why you lie to me?"

"Peace, woman!" ejaculated her husband, angrily. "Why do you annoy me with your senseless suspicions?"

His wife regarded him sorrowfully and scornfully a few moments, and then said:

"Oh, Joas, when I look at you and remember the dirty and idle vagabond you used to be; when I reflect that I have loved you, bad as you were, and that you pretended to love me; and see you now, with your diamonds and laces, with your fine house and many slaves, with your position near the emperor, I can hardly realize that it is you! It seems as though I must be dreaming! By what villainy and imposture you have reached your present position I cannot even guess; but I do know, and solemnly warn you, that the end will surely come, and that your punishment will be sure and heavy!"

The false count had listened to his wife's impassioned warning, as serenely as if she had been declaring herself deeply in love with him, and he now said:

"Go on, my good woman; I like to hear you! After the flattery of the painted court dames, it is really refreshing to see such honest simplicity!"

"Joas, Joas!" said his wife, sternly, "why do you treat me in this style? Has your heart never reproached you for your cruel deception? Have you never regretted my faithful love?"

"Of course, of course!" said her husband, in an ironical tone. "I look as if I had pined away for love of an ignorant peasant woman, don't I?"

He glanced at his portly figure as he spoke, with a look of satisfaction, and added:

"We have had enough of this nonsense, Mercedes. You either want something of me, or you don't! Now come to business!"

His wife had been attentively regarding him, and now said:

"What means all this paint and powder, Joas? Why have you dyed those few locks of grey hair over your forehead? As I look at you, I wonder more and more how I came to know you, so perfectly the moment I saw you—your dress changes you so much! For whom are you dressed so splendidly? Is

the common report true that you are addressing the beautiful daughter of Senhor Dos Montes?"

"Is there such a report?" asked her husband, coolly. "Really rumour makes pretty free with my doings. Suppose I intend to marry Nona Dos Montes—what then?"

His wife regarded him with a look of astonishment and horror.

"What!" she exclaimed, "would you marry that innocent girl while you have a wife living?"

"There is no knowing how long my wife may be living," he replied. "And his eyes expressed an awful menace.

The woman cowered before that look, and an expression of fear was mingled with the look of horror on her face.

"Joas," she finally exclaimed, "are you a fiend incarnate?"

"I don't know that I am, madam; although your question is decidedly flattering. I believe you have not yet informed me what your business is!"

"I told you, Joas; I want justice," was the reply.

"Well, what do you call justice? Now, Mercedes, let us come to terms. If you want money, you shall have it!"

His wife made no reply. The false count took his sword from his pocket and continued:

"I will settle a handsome sum of money on you, Mercedes, enough to support you in the style in which I live; but you must go back to Portugal! I should think you would like to go back, and buy you a house, and lord it over the peasant women who used to know you."

"Where would they think I got the money, Joas?" asked the wife. "Oh, my husband, do not send me away. I love you still, despite all the past. What would you do if I were away?"

"Do? I should not kill myself, I promise you. I shall marry Nona Dos Montes, and be happy."

"Never! I will not agree to your terms, Joas," said his wife resolutely. "I shall stay here, and you must acknowledge me as your wife and the rightful mistress of your establishment. I was a good enough wife to share your prosperity. I shall go to Nona Dos Montes, and tell her who I am, and what you are."

"No, you won't!" exclaimed her enraged husband, as he grasped his wife firmly. "You won't do any such thing!"

He caught up his large linen handkerchief and thrust it into her mouth; and then, seizing her scarf, bound her arms tightly to her side, notwithstanding her struggles to free herself.

"We will see now which is master, Mercedes," he muttered, as he took a lamp from his dressing-bureau and lighted it from the gas jet. "Come with me!"

He half dragged, half carried her from the apartment, down the stairs, through the wide hall, and down another flight of stairs, through the cellar, into the strong wine-vault in which he had temporarily hidden the body of Grotos years before.

"Now, madam," he exclaimed, as he placed her on the floor and removed the handkerchief from her mouth, "make yourself comfortable for the night."

He turned to leave the dungeon; but his wife, by a quick and nervous movement disengaged the scarf, which had become loose in her struggles, and sprang upon him with the ferocity of a tigress. The struggle that ensued was fierce. Several times the woman appeared about to triumph, for, like all her class, she was strong and active, but her husband fought well too, despite his years of luxurious ease and inactivity. The false count was several times thrown to the floor with a violence that shocked his whole frame, but in the end he triumphed. He flung his wife against the opposite wall and hastened to the door. He had barely reached the outside of the vault before he heard her fling herself against the door, but he succeeded in locking it. He then retraced his steps to his apartment, where he surveyed himself in the mirror.

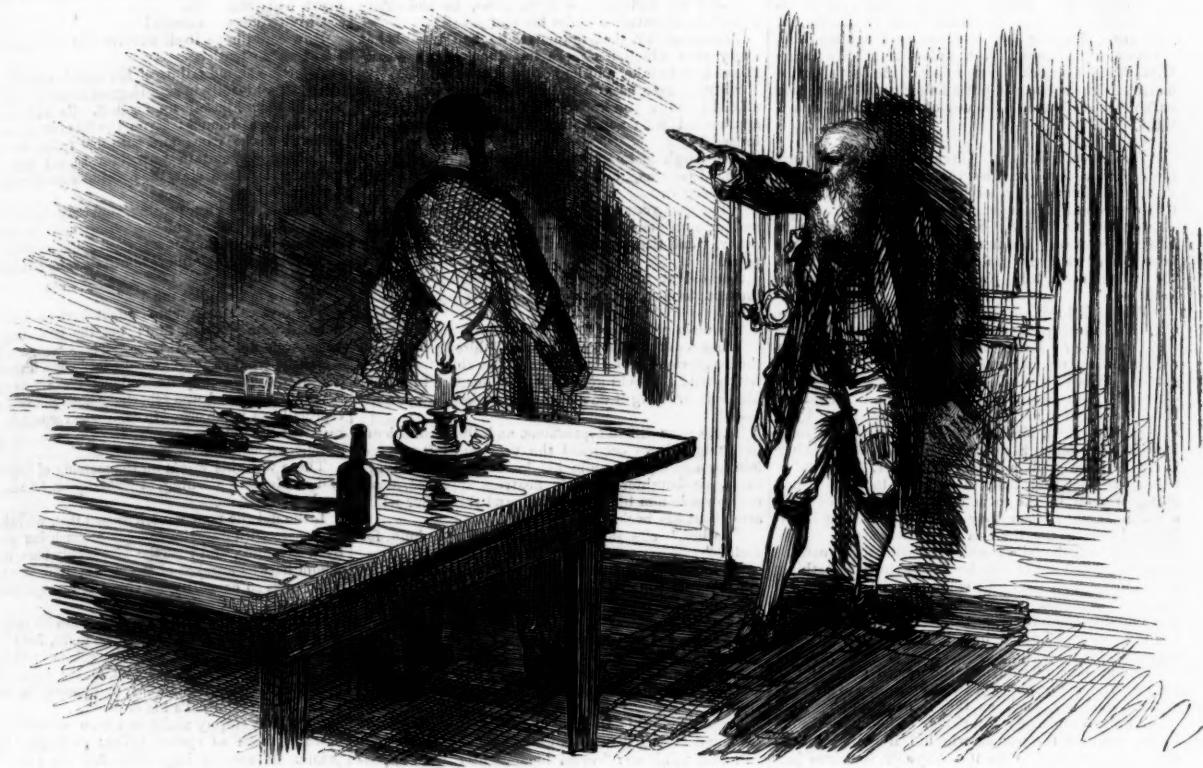
His face was scratched and bleeding; his hair and beard were forcibly uprooted in several places; his ruffles were torn, and pieces of them were hanging in shreds, while other pieces were missing altogether. His massive watch-chain was broken, and he mournfully contemplated the ruins of his jewelled watch that he had ordered from Paris. Altogether, he was a melancholy spectacle.

"Well," he said, wiping his brow, "here is a dangerous met and overcome. But who would have thought that the woman would have recognized her husband in such a costume as this was, and surrounded by every evidence of rank and wealth!"

He bathed his face in cooling lotions, and assumed his dressing-gown in place of his tattered coat, and continued:

"It is evident that I didn't give her credit for sufficient penetration! I don't believe any one but a woman could have recognized me! Mad—mad! Poor deluded creature! I shall be under the necessity of obtaining another negress to nurse her, and another overseer to watch her! I'll find a snug retreat for her, somewhere in the wilderness, tomorrow!"

(To be continued.)



[DARN CROOK DEFENDS HIS SECRET.]

THE WARNING VOICE.

By the Author of "Mrs. Larkai's Boarding School," "Man and his Idol," &c.

CHAPTER XLVII.

BEAUTY'S PLEADING.

I awoke sane; but well-nigh close to death.

Tennyson.

And twilight dawned; and morn by morn the lark,
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres; but I
Sat silent in the muffled cage.

Ibid.

INGARSTONE had come to town on business connected with the wretched, heart-broken prisoner lying in the condemned cell.

It had been made clear to him that it was a sort of duty on his part to take this step, by the rough stranger who rode up late at night, and who had put the matter in an offensively imperative manner for so uncouth a customer.

"Go up and have a talk with your friend the Home Secretary," the rough man had said. "If you don't, and this young fellow is hung, and it turns out that he is innocent, the county 'll make it hot for you."

The rough man was sufficiently outspoken.

Offensively outspoken, his lordship thought. But he had grounds for the position he took up, as a statement of what passed will show.

The rough man explained to his lordship that he was of gipsy origin, but had from a boy betrayed an amount of industry and an aptitude for business which rendered the idle life of the dwellers in tents irksome to him. He had devoted himself to trade in wild, irregular, fitful manner, seemingly inherent in his race. Horse-jabbing was his specialty; and this led him to the different fairs held about the country, where also he kept up a sort of connection with the gipsies in whose tents he would spend some of the winter months.

While transacting his business in this style, he had often received hints and suggestions from the aged gipsy queen, who had a liking for him, which he in his rough way returned.

The news of her death had, therefore, somewhat startled him, and he had come out of his way to those parts to learn the particulars of the occurrence.

Among those particulars, not the least singular was that of the fire in the tent, originating no one knew how or where, and serving not improbably to hasten the aged woman's dissolution.

The more the rough man—he was named Luke

Snow—asked about this, the more odd and suspicious it appeared.

When he learned that the Lady Beatrice was present, he had flamed up.

"It was her doings," he had said; "these aristocrats are capable of anything."

"But her motive?" the people had asked him.

"'Twas not for him to find motives for aristocrats," was his answer.

"But the queen had sent for the lady," they said.

"Had she though? That altered the question. What had she wanted with her?"

No one could guess; but her request was urgent, and when the lady came they had talked low and earnestly together. Their interview had been interrupted by the cry of "fire!" and from that moment the aged woman had never spoken again, while the Lady Beatrice appeared greatly excited. From a word or two that escaped her, the tribe gathered that the conversation had been about the murder of Lydia Ingarstone in the weir.

When Luke Snow reached this part of his story, he paused, and looked at Lord Ingarstone as if expecting confirmation on that point.

His lordship gave it.

"You are right," he said; "I had from my daughter's lips the full particulars of that interview. It did relate to our family tragedy. The aged woman declared positively she knew the murderer, but died before she could name him."

"Right," Snow replied; "she did know."

"Had she told you so?" asked his lordship.

"Yes. Two years ago she had boasted to us that she had the key to the mystery."

"But gave you no clue to it?"

"None."

"The secret died with her, then?"

"So far—yes."

"And there is an end of the matter?"

"You shall judge. That fire in the tent still puzzled me. It was strange. I questioned every soul who had been on the spot; nobody could account for it. Among the rest, I questioned the raw lad, Mat by name, who had come to Ingarstone with the message. He was confused, stammered, evidently knew more than he'd speak. So I charged him with the act outright. He denied it. Swore he was innocent. Then, to save himself, he confessed that he had been tampered with by a woman who lured him into the copse, and who offered him any money if he could persuade or mislead the Lady Beatrice, and so prevent her and the dying woman meeting. He had been afraid, and refused to have any hand in it; on which she had bought

his silence as to her proposal and presence there, and had disappeared. But Mat had never any doubt but that it was her hand which had fired the tent. He supposed that she had stolen round and listened; and when she found some revelation about to be made, had taken this desperate step to avert it."

"And this woman?" Ingarstone asked. "Do you know her?"

"Yes."

"Not one of the tribe?"

"Not wholly so. She is the daughter of one Darn Crook, who years ago enticed a beautiful young gipsy, of Spanish origin, from the tents, and married her. She was named after her mother, who died when she was an infant, Mildred. Darn Crook's daughter was brought up in London; but the tribe did not forget her or her mother. They had a reason for not doing so. The poor mother had, unhappily, another daughter, born before marriage, and named Miriam, who had been reared by and still dwells among the tribe. The two girls—Mildred and Miriam—were the living counterparts of each other. So much alike, that difference of dress only distinguished them."

Here his lordship interrupted.

"Is it possible that—"

"Mildred Crook calls herself—after her mother she pretends—the Donna Ximena de Cordova."

"And her sister, Miriam—"

"Is at present confined in the county gaol."

From this point Lord Ingarstone listened with the most intense interest.

The fact that Donna Ximena was of gipsy birth had been known to him at the time he consented—for his own purposes—to invite her to Ingarstone. But he had believed, on his son's representations—and, in his turn, Cecil was only repeating what the donna had told him—that her father was really a Spanish grande, who had taken a fancy to her mother while the tribe was in Spain, and had married, but afterwards deserted her. To find Darn Crook, the notorious swindler, in the place of the Spanish grande, was naturally startling. But what most arrested his lordship, was Snow's statement as to the likeness between Mildred Crook and her mother's daughter, Miriam.

That it was the latter who had been induced to confront Radical Holt in his cell there could be little doubt; and Ingarstone began to see that what the woman had relied on as a triumphant proof of her innocence was, in fact, only the result of guilty complicity.

"I ought not to have let her escape," was his remark.

"There you're about right, my lord," replied Snow.

quietly. "I'm a man as puts this and that together, and what I say is this: Here's a poor lad lying in his cell under sentence of death from circumstantial evidence. Nothing but circumstances against him, my lord, as you know. Yet, unless somebody interferes, at eight o'clock the morning of the day after tomorrow, circumstances'll put a halter round that poor lad's neck and launch him out of the world. Am I right?"

"Quite right."

"Well, then, look here. Circumstances are against him. Good. Let's see how they look if we point 'em in a fresh direction. A strong point in the prosecutor's case was Holt's possession of the diamonds. What answer does he make? He says, they were given to him by a woman. He describes the woman. He says he saw her twice, and couldn't be mistaken. Once in the wood near this place—once in a gaming-house—"

"Which I have reason to know she has since frequented," interrupted Ingastone.

"You have? Better still. But let us go on in regular order, piecing our new chain of evidence together. When he sees her first, he particularly notices—what? You heard the evidence, and I read it. He notices round her neck a silver cross, hung by a silver chain. Now, Mildred Crook is a Catholic, Crook himself being one. Strong evidence that, of her being likely to have such a thing about her. But we've better evidence than that. I've had a talk with that dying woman in the room down by your lordship's stables—Janet Leeson they call her—and she knew Mildred during the time—a very brief one, in which she lived with the tribe; and she positively swears to seeing her steal out of this house, and bury something in the fernery, on the night when the girl was prowling about the park. In corroboration of this, the cross was found in the fernery."

"Where Janet Leeson herself might have put it," suggested his lordship.

"So she might," returned the rough man. "I'm not stating hard facts. I'm twisting a rope of circumstantial evidence, such as they'll hang young Holt with, unless somebody interferes. The cross, being found, identifies the woman who hid it as the woman Holt saw, or helps to do it. Anyhow, it drives her into a corner. She sees that, and being naturally clever and slippery, seizes on the first and likeliest trick to save herself. She knows of the likeness between herself and the illegitimate girl, Miriam, well enough. She's heard of her being in the goal, and quick as thought, she makes that woman her innocent accomplice. Holt swears to the wrong person, and, under cover of that triumph, she escapes."

"This all?" asked his lordship, beginning to yawn.

"Not quite, my lord. We have proof that, about the time of the murder, Mildred had quitted Darn Crook's roof in a rage, and, in virtue of her mother's claims, had joined the tribe. They lay at the time somewhere in these parts—few miles off, as I understand. Now, take that fact with the other, that the gipsy queen always professed a knowledge of the murder, and, as the gipsies will tell you, always hated and avoided this Mildred, and tried, and eventually succeeded in driving her out—while they were in Spain, I believe—then consider that when Mildred gets back to these parts, the old woman is dying, and sends to Ingastone for my Lady Beatrice, desiring to make a communication to her of the very last importance. I've heard, and you know, how your guest tried to stop your daughter from going to the gipsy-tents?"

"She did. We thought it monstrous odd."

"As well you might. Now, why should she have done it? Wasn't it her guilty conscience? Didn't she fear some revelation fatal to herself? If she didn't, why did she follow the lady from the house, alone and secretly? Why did she attempt the desperate act of bribing Mat, the messenger? Why did she propose to him to lead the lady astray in the darkness? Why, but in the hope that death would come, and bury all in silence and oblivion? Depend on it, my lord, this was her motive; and when this failed, it's clear that she took her own measures, and, by firing the tent, succeeded in putting a stop to the fatal revelation."

The rough man had done.

He had made out, to his own satisfaction, that Mildred Crook, otherwise the Donna Ximena de Cordova, was a murderer as well as an adventuress, and that poor Tim Holt was going innocent to death, unless this step which he was taking should arrest his doom.

Ingastone mused and pondered much.

There was a good deal in all this, he was prepared to admit; in fact, could not help admitting. Under ordinary circumstances, his course would have been clear. He would have decided at once on communicating with the authorities, and seeking a reprieve for the condemned. As it was, his brain was confused and his sense of right and wrong warped by a certain communication, which never ceased ringing in his ears, and which was couched in these terms: "He lives! He is in England!"

These words made him a coward.

Under the influence of them alone, he had entertained an adventure under his roof.

Penetrated by that influence, he had trembled at every step which his more impetuous son had cautioned him to take, and he hesitated now.

"Strong case, as you put it, Snow," he said; "but official persons, you know—official persons—must be approached with something tangible—very tangible indeed."

The rough customer had an ingrained contempt for "official persons," and he found it hard work to help expressing it.

"Thought your lordship might be on terms—eatin' and drinkin' terms, maybe—with these nob's," said Snow, "and that you might talk it over, over your pipes."

Amused at the suggestion, his lordship dismissed the rough customer, and gave himself up to reflection.

His main point was this:

What was the relation between Mildred Crook and the mysterious being whose existence threatened him with peril? Would getting rid of her free him from his peril, or bring it down like an avalanche upon his head?

These were difficult questions, and their consideration might have occupied the time until it was too late for action; but while his lordship sat revolving them, his daughter, the fair Beatrice, appeared, stealing towards him like a sunbeam, and threw her white arm about his neck.

"Father," she said, "can nothing be done for Holt?"

He looked up in amazement.

"Why do you ask?" he inquired, astonished at hearing a question made, so to speak, out of the texture of his own thoughts.

"For poor Janet's sake," replied Beatrice. "Oh! father, she lies dying, but not unconscious. Her mind is tortured with the conviction that Holt is innocent, and that they are about to murder him. She may be right, father."

"She may," said Ingastone, shrugging his shoulders, and raising his eyebrows in his usual manner.

"You think so?" cried his daughter, with impassioned earnestness. "Oh, then you will do something? You will make inquiries? Think—there are only two days! Unless you speak in that time, he must die. And if it should be found that he is innocent, oh, my father! what would be your feelings?"

Ingastone was moved—as far as gentlemen of the Regency school ever permitted anything to move them.

"Deuced awkward!" he replied. "What's this girl to do with it?"

"He was her lover."

"Pon my life, I don't know—"

"Oh! father, for my sake, do something. You have weight and influence in high quarters. A word from you to the Home Secretary will do more than fifty petitions from the people here. At least, you can ask for a reprieve."

"And be laughed at for my pains," rejoined his lordship.

"Be it so, father. Let them laugh. That is the worst that can happen; and it's better to be laughed at in the discharge of one's duty, than to bear the stings of a remorseful conscience."

As a rule, Ingastone sneered at sentiment; but this time he looked grave. Perhaps he was not altogether a stranger to those stings of conscience! Perhaps that cool exterior hid a heart tortured often-times with something very like remorse.

His daughter, watching his face, saw that she had made an impression. By way of following it up, she sank upon her knees at his feet; and, while her hands clasped his neck, pleaded long and passionately that something might be done, some step taken, some word spoken. And in the end she was successful.

"We will go to town," said his lordship.

"To-night?" she asked.

"Impossible," was the answer.

"Then it will be too late. Oh! father, for my sake—for my sake, let us go to-night!"

He yielded, and thus it came about that, as we have seen, they arrived in London that night.

CHAPTER XLIX.

SEEING THE MINISTER.

How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!

Shakespeare.

Office hardens men. The official mind becomes callous as the neither millstone. The feelings are strangled by routine.

—Spectator.

LITTLE did poor Tim Holt, lying hopeless and helpless in the horrible cell to which he had been condemned, dream of the strange influence at work to save him.

Hope, of all feelings the last to quit the human heart, had quitted his.

Only two days to death!

How could hope itself survive the hard reality of that terrible truth?

After the signal failure of his appeal to Lord Ingastone, after his folly in swearing positively to the wrong face, he gave himself up for lost. He had knocked over his own defence: given the lie to all he himself believed to be true; and with that feeling he threw himself down, certain now that he had been born under an accursed star, the evil influence of which he could never escape.

The dull, droning, prosing, gaol chaplain had never been able to make much of him; and his dullness, droning, and prosing now seemed of less use than ever.

To all preachings and remonstrances he had but one answer:

"Leave me, and let me die."

There were voices which might have reached him, touched him, melted him; but the gaol-chaplain's voice was not one of them. There were words to which he would have listened meekly as a little child. These the gaol-chaplain had not the art to speak. So the condemned was reported callous and hardened, especially as when urged to confess and repent, he only repeated the old answer:

"Leave me, and let me die."

These were his words on the morning of Saturday; and on Monday morning, at eight o'clock, he was to go forth to death.

Little did the poor wretch suspect that, while he lay overcome with despair, his cause was being pleaded by a stranger, and that the fair, highly born woman whom he was accused of having deprived of an only sister was so earnestly striving to enlist sympathy in his behalf.

On this day, Saturday morning, when his only wish was that he might be left alone to die, Lord Ingastone set off in Redgrave's brougham, which had been sent to the hotel for him, to the house of the minister, in whose hand lay, or appeared to lie, the issues of the criminal's life or death.

The wet, stormy night had been succeeded by a morning fresh as spring, radiant as summer in full prime. It seemed impossible that the year was so advanced and winter so nigh.

It had been ascertained that the Home Secretary would be at his official residence in Downing-street, and there Ingastone found him.

The room in which the minister sat was large and lofty, with six long narrow windows, and was furnished in a manner which skillfully suggested the combination of business and luxury. The minister's desk might have passed for a dining-table, it was so large and so highly polished. The minister's Turkey carpet yielded to the feet like a field of clover. Every fitting was superb, though it tried to look strictly business-like, and the minister combined in himself the qualities which asserted themselves in his apartment.

A handsome, high-bred, portly man, with plenty of forehead, white hair, port-wine cheeks, a firm mouth, and one leg on a gout-stool. Add to this that he was dressed with the utmost accuracy, in unexceptionable elderly gentleman costume, and you have the Home Secretary of that period to the life.

"Do? Glad I see you."

That was the minister's greeting.

Ingastone replied with a facetious allusion to the gout; at which the minister, whose strong point was boyish playfulness, made a feint of throwing a blue book—one of a heap—at his visitor.

Ingastone, giving in to the humour of the man made a feint of dodging the blue-book, and so these old boys, with a dim ghost of the fun they had enjoyed as young boys, laughed and sported till the official chamber rang again with their mirth.

"And how's the shooting been at your place?" asked the minister, at length.

He was an enthusiastic sportsman, and thought more of partridges and pheasants, as far as the shooting of them went, than of anything else in the wide world.

"Plenty of pheasants," replied Ingastone.

"But you don't half preserve," said the minister.

"I am a little lax, I'm afraid," Ingastone admitted.

"A little! Hang it, man, what were the game laws passed for? And what right have you, as a peer of the realm, and a pillar of the constitution—him!—to be a little lax?" Jove! the notions one hears broached about game in these times are horrible, perfectly horrible, my boy."

"Think so? Haven't we drawn the cord a little too tight?"

"Tight? Jove! I'd make poaching a capital offence."

"Would you, though?"

"Would you, I thought? Trust me; I'd hang 'em, sir; string 'em up. And I wouldn't serve the farmers much better."

He thrust his paper-knife into the ribs of his visitor as he spoke, with the playfulness of an elephant, and then both chuckled, as if it was a great joke.

"Talking of hanging," said Ingartstone, seizing his opportunity, "I've come up about one."

The minister's face fell instantly.

"Now, don't," he said, imploringly.

"Don't what?"

"Why, don't ask me what I can't do."

"But, my boy, how do you know what 'tis?"

"Know I? I've held office all these years for nothing? You've got a hanging match on down in your part?"

"Right."

"Knew it, my boy! Read it in your face! And they've got on your blind side, and sent you up to ask for a reprieve or a pardon. I know. Can't do it."

"But you don't know the facts," urged his lordship.

"Don't I?" said the minister. "Nonsense! They're all alike. Everybody nowadays is the criminal's friend, and wants to get him off. He's so young, or he's so old; he's so recently connected, or he has not a friend in the world; he was drunk, or jealous, or mad when he did the crime—always something or other, always some excuse. And if everything else fails, if a man's an unmitigated scoundrel, or an inhuman monster, why they fall back on the sickening twaddle of conscientious scruples about capital punishment. Bah!"

The minister's disgust had so exhausted him, that he sank back in his arm-chair, and amused himself by trying to balance a long quill pen on the tip of his nose.

"But I don't put in any of those pleas," said Ingartstone.

"The dence you don't?"

"No."

"And, pray, what's your ground?"

"The man's innocence."

"Whew!"

The minister whistled, threw down his quill pen, and resettled his gouty leg.

"Don't mean to say—between ourselves, you know—that a jury have found a wrong man guilty?" he asked.

"Fact."

"What! and a judge, one of our judges, has passed sentence on him?"

"Would seem so."

"Seen? No, but is it so? Now, Ingry, my boy, you know a joke's a joke; but if this is true, it's beyond a joke. Are you prepared to give me your word that it's the fact?"

"I'll put you in possession of the circumstances, if you'll hear me?" said the peer.

The minister made a grimace at the prospect.

He had to listen to so much. People came there and told such interminable stories—always so long, generally so incorrect, so biased by personal feelings, so distorted by suppression and evasion, that he dreaded the beginning of any fresh narrative. It was like the letting out of water.

"Can't you write it down?" he asked.

"It's time. Execution on Monday."

"Jove! Wait a minute."

On one side of the apartment there was a kind of side-board, in the centre of which there stood what appeared to be a clock, but was in reality a small telegraph desk. It communicated with the House of Commons. On either side there hung a set of elastic tubes, each with an ivory mouth-piece, and distinguished by an ivory label over it. These tubes communicated with the offices of the minister's clerks.

By speaking through one of these tubes, the great man succeeded in summoning to his presence a lanky personage with straw-coloured hair, who languidly undertook to produce, and did ultimately succeed in producing a bundle of papers, tied together with red tape and endorsed "No. 1,337—Timothy Holt."

These were the papers relating to Holt's case; and having armed himself with these, the minister nodded to his friend, and said, "Fire away."

Lord Ingartstone thereupon did open fire, and set forth, as briefly as he could, the facts with which we are already familiar.

While he recited them, the minister amused himself with a pen-knife, and a quill pen; the feather part of which he succeeded in cutting into a Vandyke pattern before the tale was done.

When it was, and Ingartstone paused, he looked round in surprise.

"Go on," he said.

"Done!" was the peer's monosyllabic reply.

"What?"

The minister whirled round in his chair as far as he could, and fairly confronted his visitor.

"You're joking!" he added.

"For my life,—no."

"But, my boy, do you know what you want me to do?"

"Clearly."

"You want me to approach the throne."

"Yes."

"You want me to set aside the course of justice, and to obtain at the very least a reprieve for our interesting young friend. Isn't that so?"

"Precisely."

"And do you—now I put it to you as a man of the world—do you imagine that I can do anything of the kind? Do you think it's possible? The circumstances you have told me are, as you tell them, singular, and not uninteresting. But how am I to go to the throne with them? For that purpose, Ingry, they're so much moonshine. And you know it."

Again he made a feint of digging his friend in the ribs—this time with the pen-knife.

"Well, well. But what's to be done?" his lordship asked.

"Done? Nothing."

"But the man may be innocent of the crime for which you're going to hang him?"

"Now, really," said the minister, trying to suppress a twitch of the gout under a smile, but grinning horribly, "this is too rich. At your time of life, my boy, you ought not to need telling that we don't hang people because they're guilty, or reprieve 'em because they're innocent. We've nothing to do with that. The question for us is—Is the evidence sufficient to warrant the law in taking its course? That's all. The evidence against an angel of light might be sufficient to warrant us in hanging him; and if it was, hung he would be to dead certainty."

"But there are cases—"

"In which fresh evidence comes to our knowledge, and the new evidence is stronger than the old. Somebody confesses, for instance. Or somebody certifies, say, as to madness. But in your case there is nobody of the sort. And if there was, I should think twice before I interfered."

"Why?" asked his lordship.

"Previous conviction, my boy," cried the minister, tossing the papers into a long wicker tray, in which they would eventually be carried off.

"Mon'sous awkward, I own," said Ingartstone.

"Fatal, sir. How can I appeal to the throne with such a story, backed up with a prior conviction? What should I get for my pains? The royal assent? The royal kick more likely—and I should rightly deserve it. Now, then, you'll dine with me at the club to-night. No denial. I've given you my morning, and mean to take it out in your evening. Till then—ta, ta!"

He tried to rise—couldn't—anathematised his gout—seized a ruler and playfully aimed it at his retreating guest—burst into a laugh—and so the interview ended.

Ignorance is indeed sometimes bliss.

Better, far better, was it for the inmates of the condemned cell that he should abide in the utterness of despair—which in his case almost took the form of resignation—than that he should have been buoyed up with any hope of the result of this ministerial conference.

There is no agony like that of disappointment.

And what if that disappointment comes in the form of confirming the sentence of death on a man at less than two days' distance?

CHAPTER L

SURPRISED.

As he to me, so I to him,
To strike for vengeance dark and grim
On this red hand I swear. *Anon.*

A grey and gap-tooth'd man, as lean as death. *Tennyson.*

We left Andrew Nolan face to face with Darn Crook, the singular being with whom he had been brought in contact in a manner so strange and mysterious.

It would be difficult to say which betrayed the most astonishment.

The decrepit old man, with his bent back and bowing legs, his matted beard and green eyes, glittering under ragged eyebrows, an inch long, stood like a man seeing a ghost.

On his part, Nolan was dumb with disappointment.

"What do you want here, Andrew Nolan?" gasped the old man, in evident trepidation.

"Where is he?" was the incoherent answer.

"He? Who?"

"The man I have pursued over the roofs. The madman?"

"You mistake. No one has entered this place but yourself."

"But he lives here."

Darn Crook shook his head.

"No one lives here," he said; "I'm only here to look over the place."

"What! At three o'clock in the morning?"

"And why not? I work at night. I like it best. I can see best."

Nolan, fascinated by the glitter of those green eyes, which seemed to fasten upon him and exercise a strange and subduing influence in doing so, could quite believe it.

"But why do you come here? What do you want?" demanded the old man.

"I have been attacked by a madman," said Nolan; "and if I mistake not, he escaped into this house."

"Impossible, I tell you," cried the other, angrily.

There was a sound as of patterning footsteps on the stairs, or in the room below, as he spoke.

"Hark!" cried Nolan.

"Rats! Regiments of 'em."

"Nonsense! I'm not to be deceived. I insist on satisfying myself," said the young man.

In speaking, he moved towards the door; but Darn Crook was too quick for him. He also retreated, and stood with his back against it.

"No, no," he said; "you know too much already."

"But I will see—I will be satisfied!" cried the younger man.

Darn Crook clutched his bony fingers round the outstretched wrist next him, and they closed with the grip of a giant.

"Back!" he said. "This is my secret."

"Is it part of your secret that you keep braves to murder men in their sleep?" asked the young sailor.

"You are lying. The man is here, and you know it. Unhand me, or I will raise the neighbourhood."

He tried to throw off the hand that held his wrist with so firm a grip, and half-succeeded. The very act, however, seemed to enrage the strange old man. His green eyes seemed on a sudden to glow with flame. And as Nolan bore him back against the door, he, with the quickness of thought, put his hand to his belt, and a knife flashed in the air.

"Coward!" shrieked Nolan, darting at the hand that held the weapon.

"Which?—you or I?" the other retorted. "The young man who attacks the old, or the old man who seeks to defend himself? There!"—and he flung the knife across the room—"I spare you, for I need you!"

Seeing the temper of the man, Nolan desisted, but with an ill grace.

"Sooner or later—" he exclaimed.

"Sooner or later," interrupted the other, "you shall know all. For the present, be warned. I've lived in strange lands, young sir, and have got hold of strange ways of doing things. In Turkey they bowstring the man who knows too much. In Russia, the knout quiets him. The Venetian gaols are the Tombs of Secrets. In every land there are ready ways of dealing with a dangerous man—England not excepted."

"What! You threaten me?"

"No. I only warn you. Come—come. You and I have met before, and should understand one another. I may have my little secrets, which it isn't convenient for you to pry into; but what of that? What of that, I say, if I have also secrets which I'm willing to confide to you, and you are anxious to learn? Accident, as you call it—fate, as I name it—has brought us together again in this strange fashion. What do you suppose for? Mere squabble and wrangle? Not it! We meet because the time has come for us to meet."

"You are right," said Nolan.

Struck by the words and manner of the man, he could not repress that exclamation. It was strange—nay, something more than strange—that meeting!

As he thought of it, he could scarcely help regarding this strange old man with superstitious awe. Of all men, he was the one whom it was most his desire to see in this crisis of his life; and, lo, they were face to face!

"You are right!" he repeated. "Keep your secret, if you will. The trust you have put in me entitles you to that privilege. Still, this madman—the open window—those strange sounds in what you call an empty house—were not these enough to arouse suspicion?"

"Granted. But now to your own affairs," said Darn Crook. "You have the parchment?"

"Am I likely to part with it?"

"What! You have broken the seal? You know the contents? What prompted you? Mistrust or curiosity?"

"Neither."

"Eh! you will swear that?"

"I have said it."

"True, true. And so things turned out as I foretold, eh? Rodgrave has played the part I predicted—the traitor's part! Is it so?"

The bitterness of a despairing love shaped Nolan's answer.

"He is Ingartstone's guest, and I—I am driven from the house."

"So, so! All his doing. I told you so from the

first. All his doing. I knew it," chuckled the old man, rubbing his bony hands. " Didn't I tell you how it would be?"

" You did; but why? what was your motive?"

The green eyes scanned him suspiciously.

" Motive? I'd several. Enough for you that I thought death near, that I feared to leave my work unfinished—the work I swore on my dead wife's body to accomplish. And I saw in you an agent to my hand. I saw how things would turn—I was not disappointed. I thought I saw that you might be trusted. We shall see—we shall see! It's very clear Redgrave's your enemy, eh? Quite clear, isn't it?"

He asked the question almost fiercely.

" Quite clear," Nolan replied.

" That's right. And he's proud as Lucifer, you know that? Proud of his name, proud of his birth, proud of his long pedigree. Not a prouder man in England?"

" You are right."

" Well, then, we know what to do. Pride goes before a fall, you know. And we haven't even to dig the pit. It's dug. We've only to let him go his own way, and quick, all of a sudden—down he goes!"

Nolan's eyes flashed with a momentary gleam of triumph at the prospect of retaliating on his rival. Then he put his hand to his brow, and a heavy groan escaped him. His heart ached at the thought that the blow aimed at Redgrave must be struck through the woman who was all the world to him.

And fiercely as the flame of revenge burned within him, he caught at a momentary hope that even his own desire of vengeance might be rendered impossible of accomplishment.

" You, who know everything," he said, " know that this man had of late other views?"

" What?"

" He has paid marked attentions to a lady—"

Darn Crook burst into bitter laugh.

" Don't be alarmed," he said. " The 'lady' is perfectly harmless. She had a mad notion that she could fascinate this Redgrave into marrying her. At that time, I didn't know how far he had gone with Ingastone's daughter, and I fell in with the notion."

" You? Why?"

" Because he has ever thrown the word 'gipsy' in my face, insulted my dead wife as a 'gipsy woman'; and I would have given half I am worth that this woman—a gipsy adventurress—should have borne his name."

" She might do so yet," replied Nolan, with enthusiasm.

" No, no—impossible! Only this night I heard, from a source on which I can rely, that she has failed—wasted my money, and failed! But that's all the more reason why we should succeed. Should! We must. Remember, he hates you; has supplanted you, and you have revenge in your own hands. Think of that. Fill your mind—fill your heart, your whole being with it. You are a man—dedicate your manhood to working out your vengeance!"

There was something catching in the strange being's enthusiasm.

Some men have the faculty of moving others even against their better judgment. Darn Crook was one of these. His voice was insidious, his eye commanding. These combined gave him power over men—a power of which he was quite conscious; and he smiled grimly as he marked his influence upon Nolan.

The face of the young man flushed, his eyes sparkled, and his entire frame seemed animated by the frenzy of the moment, as he answered.

" You are right," he said. " What else is left me? What's my life worth to me, if not to turn it to that end? 'Tisn't my fault. He has robbed me of all I prize in the world—of happiness, hope, energy—everything that made a man of me. As for her—But I daren't think of that. When I think of her, it seems as if I should go mad!"

Darn Crook smiled grimly, but he put his hand very softly on the other's shoulder.

" I loved a woman once, my lad," he said; and his voice was husky with emotion.

" You?"

Nolan could not conceal his incredulity.

" Yes," replied the other. " I had a heart then. Aye, and I was smart and comely, too. There was bloom on my cheeks. I was straight of back and limb. I loved as fiercely as ever you have done, and wood too—and won. Heaven help me! what happy days they were!"

The recollection was too much, and for the moment the old man was silent.

" You think me hard and selfish. I am both. But it wasn't always so. I loved my wife better than myself. I would have died for her, poor darling! Poor murdered darling!"

" Murdered?" cried Nolan.

" Yes; that's the right word. She was murdered.

They clapt me into prison for a debt I never owed. They kept me there till I was starving—till I could have gnawed at my own fingers with hunger. And all that time I saw her, my darling, starving too—wasting day by day—growing to a shadow. I saw the hectic spot in her cheek—I heard her racked with cough. I knew the fatal signs, and knew, too, that starvation and exposure had done it all. frantic at the sight, I begged, implored, cried like a child, to be set free. I swore a Bible oath that I would pay the debt, little as I owed it, if they'd only let me go to save her life. They wouldn't. They were deaf. My wife was dying at the gate. They saw it, knew as I knew it, and were adamant. At last she died. God! shall I ever forget that day? She lay dead at my feet. My poor wife! My beautiful, fond, loving wife—dead of misery and starvation. In that hour I swore—not on my Bible, not to heaven, but to the powers of darkness—that I would be avenged. Day and night for forty years I have borne that oath in mind; and see, I am spared to fulfil it. Thousands have died around me, and I am spared. The wrong my tyrants did me I will yet return tenfold."

" And these people—what were they named?" demanded Nolan.

" Need you ask it?" cried the old man.

" Nay, do I guess aright? Was your great enemy—"

" The father of Ormond Redgrave."

A flush of indignation suffused the ingenuous face of the young man.

" No wonder your hatred is fierce and enduring," he said.

" And is it any wonder that I ask you to add your wrong to mine, that our vengeance may be complete?"

The answer of Andrew Nolan was not given in words.

With prompt impetuosity he held out both hands. They were grasped without a syllable; and thus the strange compact between these men was ratified, and its ratification boded no good to Ormond Redgrave.

It was only for a single moment, however, that the men thus stood, hands clasped and face to face.

Before a word could be spoken, the attention of each was arrested by a peculiar sound, like that of stumbling footsteps. Simultaneously they glanced toward the window, Darn Crook snatching up the light he had carried, and holding it aloft, so that its dim flicker streamed out in a feeble glare on the dark night.

In doing so, it revealed the faces of two men who stood at the window peering into the room.

Quick as thought, the old man dropped the candle, and crushed it out. Then he made for the door.

" Steady! Old fox!" cried a rough voice.

The speaker, at the same moment, leapt into the room with a rush.

The other man followed.

" Trapped at last!" he exclaimed, in a tone of triumph.

Andrew Nolan only waited to hear the exclamations, and then, judging that the intruders were either bailiffs or police, he crept stealthily toward the door of the room.

It was locked!

Like an arrow the thought flashed through his brain that with his already tainted character, he dared not fall into the hands of those men.

The bare idea rendered him desperate.

So, while they groped blindly in the darkness, seeking the outlet he had been fortunate enough to secure, he suddenly thrust his broad shoulder and right knee against the paneling, and, with one crash, burst open the door, and ran as if for his life.

Dark as it was, he knew that he was on a landing, and was able to feel that it ended in stairs. Down these he threw himself impetuously. Down one flight and then another. Then there came a third, winding down; but he had not reached this, when a door opened, and, with a wild shriek, some one darted out and made a clutch at him.

It was the maniac of the roof.

Ascertaining this by instinct, rather than by any other faculty, Nolan followed a similarly instinctive prompting. It was useless to waver or parley. So with one blow of his fist, he levelled the poor wretch, who fell as if lifeless.

Then Nolan tried to continue his flight.

Impossible.

The footsteps of the enemy in the rear, descending the stairs, were not the only ones that were to be heard.

People were coming up from below also; more bailiffs, more officers, or whatever they might be. It was clear that the house was surrounded, and that escape was impossible.

In the moment of desperation, he clutched at the prostrate body of the maniac by the shoulders, and dragged it into the room from which the man had emerged; then softly closing the door, turned the key in the lock.

His only chance was that the enemy might pass by that room, or that at least he might barricade the door until he could leap from the window.

The first of these contingencies happened.

" He has escaped below," he heard a voice say.

Then the feet clattered down-stairs, the sound growing less and less distinct, while Nolan listened, with his heart, so to speak, in his mouth.

As he did so, the man on the floor faintly groaned and spoke.

" I am dying!" he said.

And his voice, in that moment, recalled Lord Garstone's more strikingly than his face had done the face of his lordship.

(To be continued.)

DESTRUCTIBILITY OF POISON BY HEAT.—The experiments of Dr. W. Henry go far to show that the poison of scarlet fever, like that of typhus, is destroyed by a dry heat. Dr. Henry mentions four instances where flannel waistcoats were taken from scarlatina patients, and, after exposure to a dry heat of 200 deg. to 206 deg. Fahr., were worn for several hours by children of the respective ages of six, ten, twelve, and thirteen, who never had had the disease before. Notwithstanding the readiness with which the poison of scarlet fever is propagated by means of clothes, no result followed in any instance. It was supposed that the poison in these cases was destroyed, and not merely dissipated, by the heat. Thus it was found that the volatile portion of vaccine matter was dissipated at a temperature below 120 deg. Fahr., but that it required a temperature of 140 deg. to destroy the activity of the virus. Henry's experiments have never been repeated; but for the last thirty years the principle which he advocated has been acted on, and apparently with satisfactory results, as a general impression exists in favour of dry heat as a disinfecting agent in scarlet fever. An apparatus for subjecting clothes, &c. to the disinfecting power of dry heat is now in constant operation at the London Fever Hospital.

THE DEAD SEA.—The district of the Dead Sea, and of the whole valley of Jordan northward to the Lake of Tiberias, is quite a phenomenon in physical geography, being below the level of the ocean. No other example of similar depression is known; for that of the Caspian Sea, if admitted, is comparatively inconsiderable. The Lake of Tiberias is 328 feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and from thence the river-valley declines to the Dead Sea, the surface of which is very nearly 1,400 feet below the same level. This is the mean of barometrical and trigonometrical measurements executed by the Count de Bertou in 1838–1839, Von Russegger in 1839, Lieutenant Symonds in 1841, and Von Wildenbruch, in 1845. Owing to the great depression of the surface, together with the heights which wall in the valley, heat powerfully accumulates by the concentration and reflection of the solar rays, while the bordering highlands prevent the admission of external breezes to relieve the temperature. The climate is therefore tropical. Travellers, on descending into this low country, feel as if they had entered another zone. They confirm the accuracy of Josephus, who reports that winter in the plain of Jericho resembled spring, and that the inhabitants wore linen garments at the time when the people in other parts of Judea were shivering in the midst of snow. Snow, indeed, is almost entirely unknown in the valley. The mean annual temperature, in the southern and lower portions, is probably 75 degrees, while that of Cairo, a more southerly latitude, is 72 degrees. Hence dates ripen earlier than in Egypt. Indigo, which requires a high temperature, grows wild, and is also cultivated, the product commanding a higher price than Egyptian indigo, being of superior quality. The balsam-tree, a tropical plant, which yields the medicinal gum, now called the balsam of Mecca, and is now limited to Arabia, once flourished in groves near Jericho, and furnished the renowned balm of Gilead. The vegetation is still luxuriant and abundant wherever there is moisture. Tamarisks, willows, oleanders, and tall reeds, line the borders of the Jordan, and in many places almost hide its waters. But apart from the margin of the river, the surface has the aspect of a parched desert through the months of the summer. During the early part of May, and in the morning, a recent traveller found the thermometer standing at 92 degrees, in the shade of a clump of wild fig-trees overhanging a copious spring, and near its edge.—*Gallery of Geography.*

PECULIARITIES OF SNEEZING.—The custom of blessing persons when they sneeze is derived from very ancient times, and its origin has been variously traced. Several writers affirm that the practice commenced under Pope Gregory the Great, when a pestilence occurred, in which those who sneezed died; whence the pontiff appointed a form of prayer, and a wish to be expressed to persons sneezing, for averting this fatality, as it was deemed, from them. But the custom

is of much more ancient date. It was accounted very ancient, even in the time of Aristotle, who, in his "Problems," has endeavoured to account for it. It is alluded to in the Greek Anthology in an epigram, in which the Roman salutation of *Salve Jupiter* is given as a familiar phrase, addressed to sneezers. Alexander Ross says:—"Prometheus was the first that wished well to the sneezer, when the man which he had made of clay fell into a fit of sterminutation, upon the approach of that celestial fire which he stole from the sun." This gave origin to the custom among the Gentiles in saluting the sneezer. They used also to worship the head in sterminutation, as being a divine part, and the seat of the senses and cognition. Various testimonies show the antiquity of this custom, and Aristotle has a problem, "Why sneezing from noon to midnight was good, but from night to noon unlucky?" The Rev. John James Blount, in his "Vestiges of Ancient Manners and Customs discoverable in Modern Italy and Sicily," says:—"Whatever may have been the cause, something mysterious seems always to have been attached to the act of sneezing. Any future evil, however, to which it might have been the prelude, was supposed to be averted by a word of good augury from a bystander. This, like many other unintelligible ideas, has descended from the Romans to several modern nations. The salutation of 'God bless you,' in our own language, is sometimes given upon such occasions; in France, 'Dieu vous soit en aide,' is not uncommon; and in Italy, that of 'Viva,' or 'Felicità,' is paid with the utmost scrupulousness. Thus, too, it is recorded of Siberia, that, whenever he sneezed in his carriage, he exacted such a mark of attention from his companions with the most religious solicitude." And Brown, in his "Vulgar Errors," says:—"We read in Godigus that, upon a sneeze of the Emperor Monomopata, there passed acclamations successively through the city."

ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "The Hidden Hand," "Self-Made," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LVII

THE FLIGHT FROM FOREST LODGE.

The fond illusions I have cherished,
Anticipations once so fair,
Calmly I hear they all have perished,
But 'tis the calmness of despair.

What next?—I know not—do not care—
Come pain or pleasure, weal or woe,
There's nothing that I cannot bear,
Since I have borne this withering blow.

J. T. Watson.

MRS. LLEWELLYN was very far from being easy in her own mind. Arthur Powis was gone; Doctor Wynne was gone; Gladys was persuaded that her child was dead, and every tie that had bound her to the husband of her youthful choice was broken; and she was fast falling into a state of perfect apathy and passive obedience, that must soon transform her into a mere automaton, to be moved at the will of her guardian. Everything promised well for the success of Mrs. Llewellyn's schemes; but yet she was full of anxiety.

In a word, she feared detection!

It is true that she felt perfectly well assured that no power on earth could ever trace the fate either of Arthur Powis or of Hugh Wynne back to her agency. She had taken too great care of her personal safety for such a conclusion as that. No, the poor, idiotic, deaf mute, the irresponsible slave of her will, might, under certain contingencies, be brought to suffer; but not Mrs. Llewellyn. Her "catspaw" might be very severely burned, but her fingers would remain unburnt.

Therefore, it was not the extreme penalty of her own most atrocious crimes that she feared. It was indeed a much lighter matter, though heavy enough to her mind, since it might utterly crush her plot for the possession of Cader Idris.

It was the discovery of the parentage of Gladys' child she feared!

Mrs. Llewellyn was a bold, bad woman, as has been already shown—a woman as reckless as she was ruthless.

She wished to ascertain the circumstances that had followed the murder of Doctor Wynne, and the measures that the authorities had taken for the discovery of his murderers; so that she might be able to judge whether it would be most prudent for her to remain in the neighbourhood, or to effect a quiet removal.

Not, as I have already said, that she had any reason to fear being personally criminated; but that certain investigations might lead to the discovery of her family secrets.

Of this more presently. But, above all, she wished, if it were possible to do

so with safety, to get possession of Gladys' child, that she might work her evil will upon it, and put it out of the way for ever.

To attempt all this, it was necessary for her to go to Tyneford.

And she deemed it prudent to go in disguise; for though she was a stranger in the village, yet she could not be sure that the murdered man, before his death, had not so described her personal appearance to his wife, or to some other confidential friend, that in a small place like that she would be recognized, or suspected, as soon as she appeared in her ordinary costume.

So, not for the first time in her life, Mrs. Llewellyn determined to disguise herself.

Early the next morning, Mrs. Llewellyn commenced her preparations for the expedition.

First, to make sure that Gladys should remain quietly in bed all day, she administered to that victim powerful sedative in coffee.

Then, dressed in her ordinary walking costume of black silk, she presented herself at the bedside of Gladys to take leave of her, ostensibly to go to the baby's funeral, really to look after her own little private business.

"I am going now, my dear," said Mrs. Llewellyn.

"Are you? Oh, have everything done in the best manner, will you not?"

"Certainly, my love."

"Here is a lock of my hair. It is wet with my tears. Will you, please, lay it on the poor little thing's breast? It will be something of her mother to go down in the grave with her," said Gladys, putting a long silky black tress in the hand of Mrs. Llewellyn.

"I will do it, my dear. Do not fret."

"And please bring me a lock of my baby's hair; but cut it underneath, where it won't be missed and spoil the looks of her pretty head. Oh, yes! I know you think it makes no difference in the grave, but still—"

"My dear, I know how you feel, and I will do all you wish. Be easy, love." And with these words, the traitress stooped and pressed a kiss upon the forehead of her dupe.

She then rang for Ennis, and ordered her to remain in the room until her young mistress should have fallen asleep. Then, leaving Ennis on guard, she took a final leave of Gladys, and went down-stairs to her private room, and rang the bell that summoned the deaf mute to her presence.

As soon as he entered, she rapidly spelled upon her fingers the following directions:

"Go into the north-east corner of the stables, where you will find an old brown chaise that used to be the property of the people that lived here long ago. Take it out and clean it as well as you can in half an hour; for you have no more time to give it. Then harness the old bay horse to it, and leave it standing in the stable yard, while you return to me to report. Do you comprehend?"

The mute nodded several times in quick succession, and hurried off to obey.

As soon as he was gone, Mrs. Llewellyn locked the door and began to change her dress.

First, she took off the black lace bonnet and black silk mantle and dress, and hung them up in the wardrobe.

Then she took from a secret compartment of the same depository a grey wig, with which she covered her head, carefully tucking her own black hair out of sight under it. Then she took from her mouth four upper false teeth. Then she put on a pair of round-eyed, steel-bound spectacles; a big mob cap, with broad frills; a large straw bonnet, with an old green veil; and, finally, she wrapped herself in an ample cotton shawl, and went and stood before the glass to contemplate the effect of her disguise.

She was perfectly well satisfied.

In a few moments she had transformed herself from a handsome, stylish, fine lady of forty or forty-five, to a plain, old-fashioned countrywoman of between sixty and seventy years of age.

While she was contemplating the success of her work, Jude rapped at the door, and announced that the chaise was ready.

She signed him to follow her as she went to the stable-yard.

She got into the chaise, and took the reins into her own hands; and then she spelt upon her fingers this explanation to the astonished mute:

"I am going to Tyneford on private business connected with late affairs. I must go alone and in disguise, as you see me. You must remain here. Deaf mutes are not common; so you would be recognized as the messenger who came to fetch Doctor Wynne on the night of his murder; and you would be apprehended as a known witness in that affair, if not as a suspected principal. Therefore you must keep out of sight. Do you understand me?"

The ashen grey complexion—the open mouth and starting eyes—the whole aspect of abject terror, would have testified to his understanding the whole matter even without the quick, spasmodic nods of affirmation with which the mute answered his mistress.

"Now, then, listen to me farther: I shall be back here between six and seven o'clock. I wish to get into the house and change my clothes before any one sees me. Therefore, you must contrive to keep Ennis out of the way for an hour. Do you understand that?"

The mute, still under the influence of terror, tremblingly spelled upon his fingers:

"What hour must I keep Ennis out of the way?"

"Between six and seven o'clock this evening. Now do you understand?"

The mute bobbed his head three or four times in affirmation.

And Mrs. Llewellyn drove off.

She drove by a very circuitous route to the village, where she arrived in about two hours from the time when she had left Forest Lodge.

She drove slowly along the main street of the village, pretending to stare with rustic curiosity at the signs painted over the shop-doors and at the wares displayed in the shop-windows.

She drew up before "Lacy's," which stood immediately over the way, opposite the house and surgery of the late Doctor Hugh Wynne, and where at that very moment his poor young widow lay almost at the point of death.

In getting out of the carriage, before Lacy's shop, Mrs. Llewellyn happened to cast her eyes up at the surgery opposite, and to see there, upon the door, the name of the late proprietor, which had not yet been removed. It was apparently a trifle to overwhelm an iron-hearted woman like her; but, at the sight of the murdered man's name and dwelling, she started and reeled back as from a violent blow; and she must have fallen to the ground but that she grasped the side of the chaise for support; and for some moments she clung there, deadly pale, and shaking as with an ague-fit. At length, however, she rallied, recovered, and righted herself, muttering with a horrible smile:

"To think that I should have given way to such emotion! What is one life more or less in this over-peopled world, where the strong prey upon the weak, because their strength gives them the right to do it? I take all the good things in this world that my strength or my craft gives me the power, and consequently the right, to take. My course is straight onward to my goal, and those who do not wish to be run over had better keep out of my way."

With these words, she fastened her horse to a post that stood before the door, and entered the shop.

Lacy, the proprietor, came forward to wait on her.

"What would you like to look at, ma'am?"

"Let's see," said the lady, imitating the speech and manner of a very ignorant countrywoman; "I want some good book muslin, suitable for caps."

Lacy took down a flat box, opened it, and exhibited its contents.

"Not such as that. I want a thicker muslin."

Lacy removed the first, and set a second box, open, before her.

"That's too thick."

Lacy removed the second and set a third one before her.

"This'll do; now, then, I want a half a yard o' this piece; that is to say, if you'll let me have it cheap, and throw in a spool of fine sewing cotton, and a stick of bobbin, and a bit of piping cord."

The dealer sighed, raised his eyebrows, and shrugged his shoulders, for he thought that his visitor was evidently an unprofitable customer. Then he agreed to all she proposed, and secretly adding the price of the miscellaneous items to that of the muslin, he sold it to her with the assurance that he lost by the bargain, but was well satisfied to do so for the honour of her custom.

Mrs. Llewellyn darted a keen glance at him from over her spectacles, to see if he suspected her rank, or if there was any more meaning in his words than what met the ear; but finding in his good-humoured face nothing more than the civility or the flattery of the tradesman to his patron, she went on with her pretended shopping.

"Now, young man, I want to look at some of them there cap-rubbings."

Lacy set before her the box of ribbons she had pointed out, and she was soon engaged in unrolling and examining the ribbons, and contrasting colours, and comparing shades. Suddenly, however, she started up in apparent alarm, exclaiming, hastily:

"Law! this here ain't going to do for me! I must hurry and start for home, so as to get there afore dark."

"Have you far to go, ma'am?" inquired the shopman, with all the curiosity a villager feels concerning a stranger.

"Fur to go? Yes; a matter of twelve mile, or so." "That is certainly a long way for a lady to drive alone."

"That it is! And I'm scared to death to be caught out in the night ever since I've heered tell of so many robberies and murders. They do say that a pedlar was killed hereabouts not long ago."

"Oh, yes; some escaped convicts robbed and murdered poor old Perkins the pedlar, and threw his body into the creek. But that was some time ago. Bless you, ma'am, they have murdered another man since that."

"La, now; you don't say so! Whoever did they murder now?"

"Why, didn't you really hear nothing about it?"

"La, no! How should I?"

"That's true; you live so far away. Yes, ma'am, they have murdered Doctor Hugh Wynne; who, I will say, in the short time he passed in our midst, endeared himself to us all as much, or more, than any man that ever came among us."

"Laws a mercy me! And you don't mean to say that it was him they murdered!"

Yes, I do. They set upon him as he was riding home alone one night through the woods; and they murdered and then robbed him, and left his dead body in the road, where it lay till it was found by the tax-collector the next evening."

"Lord keep us from harm! And have they catched the murderers?"

"Not one of them. They have successfully eluded all pursuit."

"Dear me! successfully eluded all pursuit! And yet they do say as murder will out. I think it's too good to be true—that saying!"

"No, it is not! It shall come true in this instance! This murder shall out. All the village loved Doctor Wynne. And so, in addition to the one hundred pounds reward for the apprehension of the murderers offered by the government, the inhabitants have subscribed the money and offered one hundred more," said the young tradesman, indignantly, for he could not bear the idea of the murderers going undetected and unpunished.

"Laws-a-daisy-me-alive! what a heap of money! I didn't think as how there was that much money in the whole county. That'll fetch 'em out, if nothing else will! But are they sure as it was the escaped convicts as did it?"

"Quite sure. Who else could it have been? He had not an enemy in the world."

"To be sure! And I have got to go home all alone; and night's coming on; and most of my way lays through them lonesome big woods! It does make me feel right down all-over! Make haste, young man, and cut me off two yards of that yellow ribbon, and roll it up along with the muslin and things, quick; because, you see, I've got to stop by the apothecary's shop to get me a dose of Epsom salts. I s'pose as how I can get what I wants over to the shop."

"I suppose so; though I believe there is no one there to wait on you except the poor boy! and whether he is to be trusted to put up medicines of course I cannot tell."

"Law! why where is the master?"

"Why, I have just told you that the late master, Doctor Hugh Wynne, was robbed and murdered?"

"Laws a mercy! You don't go for to tell me as that is his place?"

"Certainly; can't you see his name on the door? it is not taken off yet."

"Mercy on you, young man, I can't read! When I grew up, spinning and weaving, and baking and brewing, with knitting and sewing for fancy work, was considered education enough for girls; though now, forsooth, they must all learn to read and play the pinana and such! which little good it does them! So that is the doctor's shop! and with nobody left to mind it but a little boy! Who is the little boy?"

"The doctor's only son, Owen. He is left in sole charge of the shop; and an old woman, called Nancy, is left in sole charge of the house, and of the poor young widow, who is extremely ill, and also of a poor motherless baby that has been left on their hands."

"Now, you don't say so! A motherless baby! Where did that come from?"

"I believe the good doctor took charge of it with the intention of putting it out to nurse."

"And haven't they put it out, then?"

"No, I believe not. I am sure not."

"And is it still there?" inquired the visitor, involuntarily betraying so much interest in the question that the young tradesman, in answering the affirmative, inquired:

"Would you like to take it to nurse?"

"Bless the man! I look like it, don't I? My granddaughter might. She's just lost her own young one, poor gal, and is suffering dreadful, to say nothing of grieving herself half to death."

"Well, then, I should think it would be a good thing for you to take that child to your granddaughter to nurse, if you can get it."

"Why, the very thing! And I'll go right away over there now and see about it! And oh! deary me! I must make haste, too, or I shan't get home until pitch dark, or, maybe, be overtaken by them there villains, which it makes my blood run cold to think of them. So give me them parcels and let me go. Good afternoon, young man."

Saying which, the pretended country-woman received her purchases, and left the shop. She took her horse's head, and led him across the street, and tied him to a tree before the little surgery; and then walked into the house.

CHAPTER LVIII

OWEN ON GUARD.

I tell you, on an old soldier's word,
This boy will make a man.

Mary Howitt.

OWEN WYNNE stood behind the counter. A fine, manly-looking little lad for his age—tall, broad-shouldered, and full-chested, with an intellectual head and forehead, well covered with bright, curling, chestnut hair, large, well-opened blue eyes, a straight nose, full, firm lips, resolute chin, and a fair, sanguine complexion.

Now, however, the boy looked pale, and sad, and care-worn; and he was dressed in a suit of deep mourning.

He bowed to the customer as she entered, and then he stood waiting her orders.

"Pray are you the doctor's boy?" she inquired, as she stood before the counter.

"I am Doctor Wynne's son," replied Owen, in a slightly quivering voice.

"Well, then, perhaps you can put me up a dose of Epsom salts, for the bile."

Owen looked at her for a moment, and then answered:

"If you are sure that you are bilious, you had better let me make you up a small pill—that is what my father always gave in mild bilious cases."

"Well, upon my word, here is a young Solomon, teaching his grandmother! You are a clever boy, and that's a fact. You'll make a spoon or spoil a horn yet! Well, then, since you are so wise, you may make me up that pill, and mind you don't make any mistake."

"My father taught me all that I know, ma'am, and he taught me very carefully and thoroughly; and above all, he taught me never to meddle with anything that I do not understand."

"He was right. But, bless the boy! you don't say as you are the only one left to mind the shop?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"It's a wonder the whole village ain't poisoned."

"I am careful to follow my father's directions, ma'am; and so, if I cannot do anybody any good, I will not do them any harm," said Owen, grinding away at his pills.

"And you mind the shop? And who minds the house?"

"Nancy, ma'am."

"And who is she? your sister?" inquired the visitor, pretending ignorance.

"No, ma'am; she is the woman that does our work."

"Have you any brothers and sisters?"

"No, ma'am—oh, yes, I have, too! one little sister."

"Why, you are a funny boy! What do you mean by contradicting of yourself so?"

Owen blushed, and then exclaimed:

"I have no brother or sister of my own; but I have a dear little baby that looks at me; and I said I would take her for my sister; and so I will, and that is what I meant."

"Ah! oh, yes! I have heard tell about that baby. But will your mother keep it for your little sister also?"

"My mother is too ill to say anything about it now; but I know she would not put the baby out of doors."

"Your ma too ill to say anything about it? Well, I declare! So you seem to be the master of the house as well as of the shop just now."

"There is no one else, ma'am."

"Bless my soul! Why you must think yourself quite a man."

"No, I know I am only a boy; and very often I don't know what to do for the best, and then I ask Mr. Morley, and he tells me."

"Who's Mr. Morley?"

"Our minister, ma'am."

"Umph! And he tells you what to do. Well, you must be a good boy and mind what he says to you. Do you go to Sunday-school?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am."

"That's right; go to the Sunday-school, and learn your catechism, and read your Bible, and say your prayers, and you'll go straight to heaven when you die,"

said Mrs. Llewellyn, who now thought that she had the key to Owen's simple character.

"Thank you, ma'am. I'll try. Here is the pill, ma'am. You had better take it when you go to bed to-night."

"Law! what a hinsant phonomining you are, to be sure! Who made you so wise?" said the visitor, receiving the pill-box.

"Ma'am, I am not wise. It is easy to remember my father's directions in such simple cases as this."

"Well, you are a modest lad as well as a bright one. You have a deal of care on young shoulders, but I can ease you of one at least. I can take that there baby off your hands."

"Ma'am?" inquired Owen, doubtfully.

"You want a wet-nurse for that child, don't you?"

"We did want one, ma'am; but we don't now," replied Owen.

"But why don't you now? Have you got one?"

"No, ma'am, we have not got any."

"Then why don't you want one?"

"I must explain. We did inquire for one, because the baby's friends had promised to supply the money to pay a nurse; and perhaps they gave it to my father the last night of his life, when we know that he went to see them again; but my dear father—" Here Owen broke down and sobbed.

"I know, my poor little man! He was set upon and robbed, and murdered! and in course the money went with all the rest," said the visitor, soothingly.

"Yes, ma'am; and with my father's death we lost all trace of the baby's friends—unless my mother knows who they are; but she is too ill to be talked with about them now. And so you see we have neither the money to pay a nurse for the baby, nor any trace of any friends we could apply to in its behalf. And that is the reason we cannot employ a wet-nurse now. But the baby is doing very well, ma'am," said Owen, wiping his eyes and making a noble effort to control his boyish grief.

"Well, my little lad, listen to me. My granddaughter lost her little un—which it was just a week old a Sunday, and as fine a boy as ever was born; howsoever, it died; and she will be glad enough to take this baby to nuss. So, if you will wrap it up warm, I will carry it out to her this blessed evening. And me and my granddaughter will be willing for to wait for the pay until you find out who the baby's friends is."

"Thank you, ma'am, very kindly; but I cannot let the baby go," said Owen, gently.

"But why not, when I will take good care of it, and wait for the pay as long as you like?"

"Because, ma'am, the baby was given to my father to take care of, and he promised to take care of it, and would have done so if he had lived; and now that he is gone and I stand in his place, I must perform all he promised to do, and keep the baby, at least until my mother is able to say what shall be done with it."

"Why, you don't go for to say as you mean to take the burden of that child on to yourselves?"

"It is no burden, ma'am. Old Naucy is very fond of it, and likes to take care of it."

"But the cost?"

"That is nothing, ma'am—only a drop of milk and a little flour to make its food, which surely a beggar would never begrudge to a baby."

"You will be beggars yourselves if you go on in this way," exclaimed the visitor, nearly betraying herself by the extreme irritation she felt at being foiled by a simple boy.

"Oh, no, ma'am, we shall never be beggars, not if we were to have to keep this baby and ten more all our lives."

"Hey-day! What's to prevent it, I would like to know?"

"I am to prevent it, ma'am—with the blessing of heaven," said Owen, at once proudly and reverently, as he asserted himself and appealed to Divine Providence.

"Oh!" exclaimed the baffled woman, turning away from the brave blue eyes that met hers so frankly and so fearlessly. "I hate to talk to a child or a fool. You had better let me take that baby home to my granddaughter to nuss. She'll be a blessing to it, and it will be a comfort to her."

"I am sorry to refuse you, ma'am; but I cannot send the baby away. And I am sure my mother would not, if she were well enough to be asked."

"The baby will be apt to worry your mother into fits and keep her back from getting well. And for her sake, if for nobody else's, you ought to let me take it away," said the visitor, appealing to what she rightly considered Owen's most sensitive point, his love for his bereaved mother.

"I thank you very much indeed, ma'am. It does seem ill-natured in me to keep on denying you. But if you please, ma'am, the poor little thing does not worry mother a bit. It lies there in its little cradle, as meek and as patient as if it knew it was a poor little

motherless thing, dependent on strangers, and had to be very good," said Owen, tenderly—for the boy had much of his father's sympathetic nature in him.

"What an idea!"

"It is true, ma'am. Everybody that sees it says that it is the quietest little creature that ever was, and that it is really wonderful how quiet it is. And Mrs. Morley—that is our minister's wife—says it is a special blessing of Providence."

"Umph!" muttered the visitor to herself. "It is the effect of the sedatives administered to the mother." Then, speaking aloud, she continued:

"See here, my little man—I am very anxious on my poor granddaughter's account, to have that there baby. She suffers for one so much."

"I am very sorry for your granddaughter, ma'am; but I cannot part with the baby."

"Bless the boy, how obstinate he is, to be sure! Now, look here, my little fellow," said the tempter, trying the effect of bribery. "It is all for the baby's good and my granddaughter's benefit; so if you will let me have that there baby, I will give you five pounds."

"Oh, ma'am!" exclaimed the deeply-shocked boy.

"Now consider how many spinning-tops and marbles and ginger-bread nuts five pounds would buy," said she, persuasively.

"Oh, ma'am! and do you think I could be so dishonest and so cruel and so wicked as to sell little Gladys?"

"Little—whom?" exclaimed the startled woman, scarcely believing her ears.

"Little Gladys, ma'am, our baby."

"Where did you get that name?"

"Father and mother gave it to the baby, ma'am."

Mrs. Llewellyn felt herself growing so deadly cold that she knew she was turning ghastly pale. So she beat her head low over the counter to conceal her change of complexion, and whispered:

"Has no one any idea who the baby's friends are?"

"No one, unless mother has; but she has been delirious with fever ever since father was brought home dead—"

Owen's voice broke down again, and he sobbed. "Fool lad! what a terrible loss, to be sure! I hope the constables will soon find them horrid villains, and have 'em all hanged. Hain't they got no clue yet?"

"No, ma'am; everybody is waiting now for my mother to come to herself. She knew where father went that last night of his life. And so Mr. Morley thinks that she will be able to give a clue to the whole affair."

"Whatever do you mean by the whole affair, lad?"

"Why all about the baby's parents, and my father's murderers," answered Owen, sententiously.

Lower and lower drooped the head of the visitor as she heard these ill-boding words. At length, in a sort of desperation, she said:

"Well, my lad, if so be you can't let me take the baby along o' me, you can let me have a peep at it, I suppose?"

"I am so sorry to keep on saying 'no,' ma'am, because it seems so uncivil; but the baby is asleep in its cradle in mother's room, and I must not disturb it, or her either, because father always said that neither little children nor sick people ought ever to be awakened out of their sleep. And all the comfort I have now is remembering and following my father's directions."

Mrs. Llewellyn could scarcely restrain an expression of impatience. But she drew the faded old green veil closely over her face before raising her head and saying:

"It seems then as how nothink can be done till your ma comes to her senses. But I daresay when she does, and when she hears about me and my granddaughter wanting to take the baby to nuss, she'll let us have it, and think us, too."

"Maybe she may, ma'am. Anyhow, I will tell her you called, if you will please to give me your name and address," said Owen, taking down the little "Order slate" that hung on nail against the wall.

"Sertainly—Mrs. Stone, near the cross-roads," said the impostor, giving a name that was very common in that neighbourhood.

Owen indifferently wrote down the false name and address, and replaced the slate on its hook.

"Good-bye, my little lad—be sure you tell your ma," said the visitor, preparing to leave the shop.

"Good-bye, ma'am. I will be sure to tell my mother," replied Owen.

"And mind you go to Sunday-school regular, and read your Bible every day."

"Yes, ma'am; thank you, I will," said the boy, bowing politely as the visitor left the shop.

Mrs. Llewellyn re-entered her old chaise, and drove off. When she was clear of the village, she threw away the pill-box. And, as she drove slowly onward, she communed with herself as follows:

"So! the community here are entirely off the scent

of the doctor's murderers—bah! that is an ugly word!—and of the child's parentage! They think that the doctor was murdered by that wretched band of escaped felons on whose unlucky shoulders is laid the burden of crimes whose real perpetrators cannot be discovered! And they think that the babe is a motherless child that was committed to the doctor's care, to be put out to nurse. And only the doctor's widow is supposed to know anything certain upon any of these points. And her friends are waiting for her recovery, in the hope that she may be able to communicate some important facts in relation to her husband's motions on that last night of his life, that shall lead to the apprehension of the doctor's murderers and to the discovery of the babe's friends. Well! for the first proposition—I, for one, think that they will have some trouble to get at the real marksman that fired the good shot that proved so fatal to a meddler. But as to the other matter, now—the child! It is impossible to conjecture how much that man may have confided to his wife. If he has told her as much as he knows, she may be able to follow up the clue that he has given her, until it brings her to Forest Lodge, and into the very chamber of Gladys. And there would be a *contretemps*! I must prevent that! Before the doctor's widow recovers, we must fit from Forest Lodge, leaving no trace of our presence there, or departure thence. We must remove all the new furniture, and not only lock up, but nail up, all the doors and windows."

So saying, she whipped her old horse into a trot, and drove rapidly towards the house in the woods, where she arrived a little after six o'clock.

She drove immediately into the stable-yard, where the deaf mute was already waiting to attend her.

She sprang from the chaise, threw him the reins, and then rapidly spelled upon her fingers the question:

"Is the coast clear?"

The mute nodded, and then spelled the explanation: "Ennis happened to be in the young lady's chamber when the clock struck six. So I crept up to the door and locked her fast in."

"Quite right," replied the lady.

Mrs. Llewellyn then hurried up to the house and into her own private apartment, where she threw off her disguise, carefully concealed it, and resumed her usual dress.

Then she went up to the chamber of Gladys, noiselessly unlocked the door, and entered.

Ennis was sitting, sewing by the last light of the setting sun, in the recess of the west window, quite unconscious of having been made a prisoner.

She arose and stood up respectfully at the entrance of her mistress.

"How has your young lady passed the day?" inquired Mrs. Llewellyn.

"Very quiet, ma'am. She has dozed most of the time. I gave her some calf-foot jelly about dinner time, and I gave her her tea about half an hour ago."

"That was right. Now go down, Ennis, and get my tea ready. Make some nice toast, and do not forget to put the currant jelly and preserved figs on the table," said the lady, taking a bunch of keys from her pocket and handing them to the maid.

Ennis left the room.

Mrs. Llewellyn approached the bedside of her dupe.

Gladys was lying placidly on her right side in front of the bed—not dozing, but still under the influence of the drug; for the expression of her countenance was unnaturally calm as she looked up at the woman who was supposed to have just returned from the baby's funeral.

"How are you now, my dear?"

"I don't know. Is my poor little baby laid in her grave?" said Gladys.

"Yes, my dear—I saw it done; everything was conducted in the best possible manner. And the doctor told me something that it will be a great comfort to you to hear."

"What was that?"

"Why, that when he found the baby so very ill, and feared for its life, he sent for the minister of his church, and had it christened."

"I am glad of that. Yes, that is a comfort to me. What name did he give the poor little thing?"

Mrs. Llewellyn hesitated a moment, and then said:

"'Mary.' As he did not know what our wishes might be on the subject, and as there was no time to consult us, he gave the child the simple name of 'Mary.'

"I am glad of that too. It was my dear mother's name. If she had lived, and my child had lived, how fondly she would have loved her. Oh, still I hope that up in heaven she has received the little stranger angel on her bosom," murmured Gladys, as if speaking to herself.

"No doubt of it, my dear. Well, and the same minister that christened the child yesterday, buried it to-day. And I have given orders for a pure white

marble slab—inscribed with the name of 'Mary' and the date of the birth and of the death, together with text of 'Suffer little children to come unto me'—to be placed at the head of the grave. And as soon as it is done you shall go and see it."

"Thank you, very much. Did you—did you bring me a lock of my baby's hair?" inquired Gladys, anxiously.

"There!" involuntarily exclaimed Mrs. Llewellyn, and then she paused in thought.

Of course, as the whole story was a base fabrication, and as the deceiver had seen no baby, alive or dead, she had got no baby's lock of hair, and, in fact, she had forgotten all about her promise to bring any such thing, until the question of Gladys recalled it to her memory and surprised from her an exclamation of dismay.

But Mrs. Llewellyn's presence of mind and promptitude in deception saved her.

"There!" she repeated in precisely the same tone of dismay; "if I have not gone and left it in my dressing-room, where I took of my bonnet. I will go and bring it to you, my dear."

"Oh, I was so afraid, by your looks when I asked you, that you had forgotten it altogether," said Gladys.

"No, my dear, I could never do that," replied the lady, as she left the room.

She went straight to her own chamber, opened a small casket that stood upon the chimney-piece, and took from it a small folded paper that contained a lock of baby's hair. It was the first clippings of James Stukely's hair, and had been preserved by his mother all these years.

She took the tress of hair from its discoloured wrappings, and carried it into the chamber of Gladys, and laid it before her, saying:

"Here, my dear, here is the little lock; I cut it myself, underneath the back of the head, where it could never be missed."

Gladys took the false hair in her hands and gazed tenderly upon it, murmuring in a tone of affectionate regret:

"Poor little thing! This is all I shall ever have of her. But how dead it looks!"

"My dear, it was cut from the head of a dead child," said Mrs. Llewellyn.

"Yes, I suppose that is the reason why it looks so," said Gladys, pressing the hair to her lips, and then placing it on her heart.

The gentle excitement produced by the return of Mrs. Llewellyn was short-lived.

Very soon Gladys turned her face to the wall, and overpowered by the strong sedative, that in her weak condition had produced an unusually great effect upon her nerves, suffered herself to drop into lethargy.

As soon as Gladys was quiet, Mrs. Llewellyn left the room, and went down-stairs, to enjoy alone her luxurious supper.

As she sat at the table, she laughed inwardly at a thought that crossed her mind.

"I can write and tell James," she murmured to herself, "that Gladys must love him secretly; because she has begged from me a lock of his hair, and is wearing it next to her heart! Poor boy! how happy it will make him! But women will seem to him more of an enigma than ever. I fancy I hear my poor darling exclaiming 'Extraordinary!'"

And Mrs. Llewellyn laughed again.

As soon as she had finished her supper, she summoned her deaf and dumb accomplice to her presence, and consulted with him concerning immediate preparations for departure from Forest Lodge.

She knew that she had but a short time left in which to effect a removal, if she wished to escape, before the possible recovery and revelations of the doctor's widow should lead to investigations in her neighbourhood.

So that very evening she commenced preparations for her departure.

First of all, the rooms were all dismantled of their rich curtains and carpets, which were packed up that night, and early the next morning sent off.

Next, the heavier furniture was packed up and sent after them.

Finally, when everything was quite ready for their fitting, and the ample family travelling carriage stood on the grass-grown drive before the door, Gladys was told that they were all going on a pleasant summer tour for her health, and that she must get up and be dressed for the journey.

The poor young creature, bereaved of every object of her affections, sickened by 'hope deferred,' and deadened by deleterious drugs, had by this time fallen into a state of perfect apathy and passive obedience.

She expressed no surprise, asked no questions, made no objections, but permitted herself to be lifted from the bed, dressed in her travelling suit, and taken down-stairs by Mrs. Llewellyn and Ennis.

They placed her in a recumbent position on the

front seat of the carriage, and they themselves took the back seats.

And thus Gladys was taken away from Forest Lodge, to be conveyed to "parts unknown."

And now we must return to Amy Wynne.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

BROWN BRONZE DIP FOR COATING IRON HOOKS, &c.—Iron scales, 1 pound; arsenic, 1 ounce; muriatic acid, 1 pound; zinc, solid, 10 ounces; the zinc should be kept in only when the bath is used. The castings must be perfectly clean from sand and grease.

MEDICINAL PLANTS.—Mitcham produces annually from 80,000 to 40,000 bushels of roses, and about 11 tons of camomile flowers. Lavender yields from 10 lbs. to 20 lbs. of oil per acre. Four hundred of camomile flowers are about the yield per acre, giving from 8 to 10 lbs. of oil. Penny royal gives about 12 lbs. per acre.

TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS.—According to Sir Charles Bright, there only remains about 100 miles of land telegraph communication to be completed before India and England are in direct connection. Another route between England and India, through Russia, by way of Tiflis and Teheran, will be ready in a few weeks. Sir Charles thinks that, in three years, we may have daily telegrams from Hong-Kong, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Melbourne.

THE THERMOMETER.—Hero, of Alexandria, who lived about 130 B.C., is said to have been the inventor of an instrument for measuring the heat of the atmosphere, which continued in use until the close of the 16th century. It was then reduced to a more convenient form by Santonio, an Italian; it was afterwards improved upon by Fahrenheit, a Dutchman, who, in 1720, affixed the graduating scale, and other details, which render the thermometer the instrument of practical utility which it now is.

THE APPLICATIONS OF ELECTRICITY.

A GRAND prize of 50,000f., offered by the Emperor of the French, has been awarded to M. Ruhmkorff, and has given rise to a very remarkable report upon the subject in general.

The prize was originally offered in 1852, and its award entrusted to a commission composed of the following gentlemen:—M. Dumas, senator, president; Messrs. Pelouze, Regnault, Bayer, Serres, Béquerel; Baron G. Dupin, Baron Séguier, General Morin, General Probert, and H. Saute-Claire Deville, all members of the Institute; M. Reynaud, inspector-general of roads and bridges, and chief of the light-house service; and M. Jamin, Professor of Physics of the Faculty of Sciences in Paris.

In 1858, the commission proceeded to the award, and came to the decision that there was no application of sufficient importance to warrant the disposal of such a prize, but petitioned the Emperor to allow the offer to stand good for the next period of five years. The present report announces a notable improvement in the application of electrical power, and awards the grand prize to M. Ruhmkorff. M. Froment has been raised to the grade of officer of the Legion of Honour, at the suggestion of the commission.

In the third place, the commission recommend the repetition of the offer of the prize of 50,000f., and this recommendation has been acceded to by the Emperor. The report of the commission is from the pen of its president, M. Dumas.

M. Ruhmkorff, it appears, was formerly a workman in the employ of some of the best instrument makers in France, became afterwards a manufacturer on his own account, and finally head of one of the first establishments in Europe. He is essentially a self-educated and self-made man, and, in the words of the report, "worthy to serve as a model to the many intelligent workmen engaged in the manufacture of instruments of precision."

After referring to the discoveries of Ampère, Erstedt, and Faraday, the report goes on to say:—Every time that the electricity of the pile comes into contact with a conducting wire, and produces a current therein; every time that the communication and the current are interrupted, the phenomena which are produced are not confined to such transmission or interruption of the current. The bodies in the neighbourhood of the conductor are influenced. If the wire which receives the current is wound round a bobbin, and this in its turn is enveloped in another bobbin of uncharged wire, each time that a direct current is created or interrupted in the former, a current is produced in the latter in the contrary direction. In multiplying these interruptions, or in rendering them more frequent, the inductive coil becomes an electrical apparatus of a special and novel kind, and presents phenomena which resemble those of the plate machine.

From the year 1851, M. Ruhmkorff has devoted himself to the construction and perfecting of such apparatus; and he has succeeded in giving his name to it, in raising it to importance in a scientific point of view, and in endowing it with an amount of energy which fits it for the basis of serious applications. The apparatus of Ruhmkorff, then, combines the two forms of electricity which were separated by a long interval, that of the fractional machine and of the pile. The effects of the Ruhmkorff apparatus are well known; it can be charged almost instantaneously; its spark inflames combustible substances, melts metals and the most refractory minerals, and reproduces all the effects of lightning, and pierces without difficulty masses of glass four inches in thickness.

Electricity can now be employed to illuminate glass tubes in such a manner as to be highly useful in mines, or other places where there is danger of explosion; under water, for divers; and in surgery, for throwing light into the mouth or other parts, without producing any sensation of heat. The Ruhmkorff apparatus has been found particularly useful for marking the instant of the departure of projectiles, and that of their striking any object, and thereby measuring their velocities. Five hundred have been constructed expressly to inflame the gas used in the machine Lenoir; and it is in everyday use in quarries, tunnels, and other situations for the firing of trains of powder; for which its regularity of action, its great power, and the distance through which it operates, render it peculiarly adapted. The few elements which it requires, stated at three in lieu of 100, and its capacity for firing eight or ten trains or mines at the same instant, are also great additional advantages. In 1858 it was employed with great success by Lieutenant Tréve, of the French navy, in the removal of the bars formed in the lagunes of Venice; and in 1860 it was with it that the principal fort of the Peiho, in China, was blown up by the firing of eight mines simultaneously, and that the strong iron stockades were cleared from the bed of the river.

The report dwells at considerable length on the application of electricity in the mechanical arts, for the purposes of illumination in electro-metallurgy and in surgery.

With respect to the first of these divisions, the report says that, notwithstanding the great improvements that have been made, the "electric-horse" costs at present 20 or 30 times more than the "steam horse," and that, "as a motor for works requiring power, electricity is therefore yet far from supplying a substitute for steam." But there are many cases in which it is serviceable, such, for instance, as in the machine Lenoir, in which the sudden ignition of gas causes an instantaneous elevation of temperature, first on one side of a piston in a cylinder and then on the other, and thus creating a motor; or for producing, at a given moment, and at a distance, the movement of light mechanical appliances which direct the action of other parts moved by powerful mechanical means, acting in this latter case after the manner of the nervous system in animals, which transmits the orders, and leaves to the muscles the task of carrying them into effect. In this way it has been used to throw into action the breaks of railway carriages, causing the impetus of the wheels themselves to retard their own progress.

Reference is made also to the engraving of rollers by means of a design drawn with non-conducting ink or metallic paper; to the copying of a design from one roller on another, as in the machine of M. Cazette; and to the pantographic apparatus of M. Cazette, which is described as capable of transmitting from one end of France to the other despatches in any language whatever, tracing drawings, or whatever is delineated on a sheet of metallic paper prepared for the purpose, and reproduced on another paper rendered chemically impressionable to the electric current; to the weaving machinery of M. Bouëlli, which, although not found to succeed in complicated work, will, it is expected, be eventually applied usefully in other cases.

ELECTRICITY.—The word is derived from *elektron*, the Greek for amber; that being the substance in which the existence of an electric fluid—capable of being excited and accumulated—was discovered, 600 B.C. Electricity, however, considered as a science, is but a modern origin. William Gilbert, a physician in London in 1600, is the earliest writer on the subject; other authors followed, at intervals; and in the year 1660 the first electrical machine was invented. This was gradually improved upon, and in 1774 it began to be used for medical purposes.

GUN-COTTON.—Trials are still going on with gun-cotton; and if its deterioration can be prevented, there can be little doubt that it will prove a most valuable addition to, if not a substitute for, gunpowder. We have already recorded its power in the destruction of an Armstrong 110-pounder, when used in a shell; and we may hence judge that the armour-plates, which are little affected by the explosion of powder shells, will

be cut in two by shells filled with gun-cotton. It is true that gunpowder deteriorates both from damp and motion, but not in so great a degree from exposure to the atmosphere as gun-cotton. On the other hand, gun-cotton may be carried wet in tanks in perfect security, and possesses, both in power and extreme lightness and cost, and in not fouling the guns, very great advantages over gunpowder.

M. Richter, of Stuttgart, has devised a novel means of extracting the juice from grapes. Instead of pressing them in the ordinary way, he puts them in a drum provided with a suitable strainer, and rotating at the rate of 1,000 or 1,500 times a minute. The process is said to have the following advantages over the ordinary method:—The time required for the operation is greatly lessened, the whole of the must from 1 cwt. of grapes being obtained in five minutes; the quantity of juice is increased by 5 or 6 per cent.; "stalking" is rendered unnecessary, and the agitated must is so mixed with air that fermentation begins comparatively soon.

The Société Impériale d'Agriculture has offered a prize of 2,000 francs, to be given in 1867, for the best analyses of the following woods:—Oak (heart-wood or pedunculata); ash (*fraxinus excelsior*), of the age of at least forty years; pine (*pinus maritima* or *alvestris*) of the same age, and poplar (*populus tremula* or *alba*) of the age of twenty years. Analyses of the same trees five years old are also to be made, with the view of comparing the composition of woods of different ages. Specimens of the woods and of the principles obtained from them must be sent with each paper.

ANOTHER GUN.

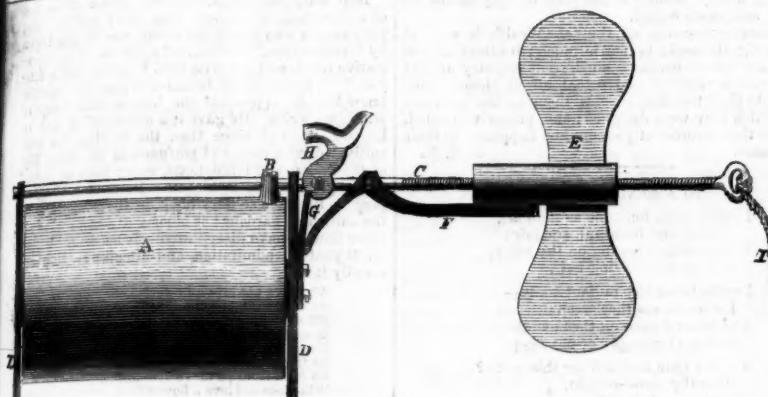
A GUN, we believe, of entirely novel construction, has been invented and patented by Major-General Hutchinson, commanding in the west of England; and if the expectations of the inventor be only partially realized, great changes will take place in the construction of much of our ordnance. The objects sought to be accomplished in the new gun are—first, that it shall weigh little more than twenty times, instead of 800 times the weight of the shot, as is usual; secondly, that without friction it shall impart rapid motion to the shot; thirdly, that the shot shall be of the form best adapted for penetrating the air and target; and, lastly, that it shall leave no vacuum behind it, and not ricochet when it strikes water.

A few experiments have been made at Plymouth. The last took place on board the gunnery ship Cambridge, in Hamoaze.

The gun is somewhat like a lengthened mortar. The chamber is of the usual cylindrical form, but only sufficiently long to hold the powder and wadding. It is at the mouth that the chief peculiarity occurs. The shot is termed disc shot. Those used last week were about the size of two very small plates placed against each other, excepting that the edge is sharp. The muzzle of the gun is much enlarged, and is formed so as to receive with great exactness the inner half of the disc shot. The more accurate the fitting is, the less the escape of gas, and the truer the aim can be taken. When in place, the outer edge of the shot is flush with the muzzle of the gun. The shot weighed 4 lbs. 2 oz.; the charge of powder 6 oz., being one-eleventh part of the weight of the shot, whereas the usual proportion is about one-fourth the weight of the shot. The gun was of nearly 200 lbs. weight double, the inventor said, what it ought to have been.

The first trial was at the 1,000 yards' target. The shot went in a good direction, and pitched 100 yards beyond the mark. The other two experiments were at 13 deg. elevation for range, and 4 deg. for aim. In neither case could the position of the shot, when they fell, be observed. The tide was out, and doubtless on striking, they, from their rotation, buried themselves in the mud. The experiments, as far as they went, were considered satisfactory. When in the gun the shot stands in a vertical position, and rotation is caused by the axis of the chamber lying above the centre of the shot, and by a projection in the interior of the muzzle, at the bottom, meeting the edge of the shot.

From the shortness of the gun, it possesses all the advantages of a breech-loader; and from the simplicity of its construction and the little metal used, it promises to be both a cheap and easily-handled weapon. The projector may be too sanguine, but he avers that on weighing no more than the ordinary 98-pounder, which discharges a 600 lb. disc. The carriage is fitted with a number of galvanised india-rubber cylindrical buffers (in contact by their sides, not extremes), placed in grooves on the flanks of the gun; these received the recoil. By a simple mechanical arrangement, the rebound was received in a similar manner on a series of rings fixed below the gun. This disposition of india-rubber rings the inventor prefers to any compression, as they do not make the gun "jump," to use the technical expression.



THE NEW TORPEDO.

TORPEDOES have come to be recognized as very formidable machines in offensive warfare, and the damage they have inflicted on the North American navy, during the war, has been very great. These machines are being continually experimented with, and are much more reliable than they were formerly. We illustrate herewith one of the latest inventions of the South.

A is the shell containing the powder, with the tube, B; fastened into it is a rod of seven-eighths iron (round, with a thread cut on it). D is a flat bar of iron (there is one on each side) one inch by one-fourth, fastened to the rod, C, far enough apart to allow the torpedo, A, to just pass in between them, to which it is soldered or brazed. E is the propeller, which has a thread cut inside the hub. F is a lever, and G is a spring fastened near one end by rivets; the other end works in a slot in the hammer, H. I is a cord by which two torpedoes are intended to be fastened together.

To operate them it is intended to have them buoyed so that they will float four or five feet below the surface; they will be stretched apart the length of the cord, and placed in the water at ebb tide above the vessel that it is intended to destroy. They are then to be floated down until the cord comes foul of the ship's cable, or the ship herself; when the two torpedoes will swing around under the ship's side. The propeller then begins to operate; as soon as the hub has passed the end of the lever, F, the hammer falls upon the cap on the tube, and the explosion occurs.

AGE AND DESTINY OF THE EARTH.

Men are in the habit of measuring the greatness and the wisdom of the universe by the duration and the profit which it promises to their own race; but the past history of the earth already shows what an insignificant moment the duration of the existence of our race upon it constitutes. A Nineveh vessel, a Roman sword, awakes in us the conception of a grand antiquity. When the European museums show us of remains in Egypt and Assyria, we gaze with silent astonishment, and despair of being able to carry our thoughts back to a period so remote. Still must the human race have existed for ages, and multiplied itself, before the pyramid of Nineveh was created. We estimate the duration of human history at six thousand years; but, immensurable as this may seem to us, what is it in comparison with the time when the earth carried successive series of rank plants and mighty animals, and no men; during which in Europe, Asia, and America, groves of tropical plants flourished, where gigantic lizards, and, after them, elephants, whose mighty remains we find buried in the earth, found a home?

Different geologists, proceeding from different premises, have sought to estimate the duration of the above created periods, and vary from a million to nine million years. All the time during which the earth generated organic beings is again small, when we compare it with the ages during which the earth was a ball of fused rocks. For the duration of its cooling from two thousand to two hundred centigrade, the experiments of Bishop upon basalt show that about three hundred and fifty years would be necessary. With regard to the time when the first nebulous mass condensed into our planetary system, our most daring conjectures must cease. The history of man, therefore, is but a short ripple in the course of time.

For a longer series of years than that during which man has already occupied this world, the existence of the present state of inorganic nature favourable to the duration of man seems to be secured, so that for

ourselves and for long generations after us we have nothing to fear. But the same forces of air and water, and the whole volcanic interior, which produced former geological revolution, and buried one series of living forms after another, act still upon the earth's crust. They will most probably bring about the last day of the human race, then those distant cosmical alterations of which we have spoken, and perhaps force us to make way for more complete living forms, as the lizard and the mammoth have given place thus, for our fellow creatures which now exist. Thus the thread which has conducted us to a universal law of nature permits a long but not an endless existence—it threatens it with a day of judgment, the dawn of which is still happily obscured. As each of us must singly endure the thought of his death, the race must endure the same. But above the forms of life gone by, the human race has high moral problems before it, the bearer of which it is, and in the completion of which it fulfils its destiny.

FORGIVE HIM.

"FORGIVE HIM!" said Mrs. Stearns; "Oh, Lowell, forgive him!"

The speaker was an aged woman and a widow. Her head was white with the frosts of years, and her mild features were deeply marked by the hand of time. There was a tear in her eye, and her face was clouded with sorrow. She spoke to her son, a middle-aged, strong-featured person, whose countenance betrayed a firm-willed, unbending heart, but yet who appeared an upright, honourable man.

"Forgive him," repeated the white-haired widow, as she raised her trembling hands towards her son. "He is your brother—your only brother. Oh! if you know your own heart, you will certainly forgive him."

"Never!" spoke Lowell Stearns, in a firm, deep tone; "John has wronged me—deeply wronged me, and I should lie to my own soul were I to forgive him now."

"And have not you wronged him?" asked his mother, impressively.

"I wronged him!—how?"

"By withholding from him your love; by treating him harshly, and causing him to sin," answered his mother, kindly.

"Cease, mother. When you say that I have caused him to sin, you are mistaken. He has chosen his own path, and now he must travel in it."

"Lowell, you are the oldest, and from you should come the love that can alone heal the wound between yourself and John."

"Listen to me, mother," said the stubborn son, with a spic of bitterness in his tone; "John has been unjust to me—he has been unmanly and unkind. He has injured me, beyond reparation."

"No, no, Lowell," quickly interrupted his mother; "not beyond reparation."

"Yes—he has injured my feelings by the most fatal darts of malice and ill-will. He has lied about me to my friends, and even assailed my private character."

"And can you not forgive all this?" asked his mother, tenderly.

"Perhaps I might," returned Lowell Stearns; "but," he added in a hoarse tone, while his frame quivered with deep feeling, he has done more than that, he has spoken of my wife, and—But I will not tell you all. I cannot forgive him this."

The strong man sank into a chair as he spoke, and for some moments his mother was silent. At length she approached him, and laid her hand upon his head.

"Forgive him!" she whispered.

"Never!" muttered Lowell.

"Forgive him, and be happy. Alas, my son, you are not happy now, nor can you be so long as you are at enmity with your brother. Oh, why will you let this breach grow wider? You know all this commenced from a mere misunderstanding between you, and now you are helping to make it worse. I know you will tell me that you have done nothing to harm John; but if you will look into your own bosom you will find that it is filled with hatred towards him. He knows this, and he acts accordingly. He is more impulsive than you are; but his heart is as kind as yours, and he is all generosity and love to his friends. More than forty years have passed over John's head, and during all that time he never spoke one unkind word to his mother."

"And did I ever speak unkindly to you, my mother?" asked Lowell, in a half-hushed tone of voice.

"No, no. You and John both have kind hearts; and it grieves me sorely to see you as you are now. It grieves me to see you both so unhappy. Ah, Lowell! I fear that you do not realize how noble a thing it is to forgive those who may have injured you."

Lowell Stearns made no reply to his mother. He saw that she was unhappy, and he knew that he was himself unhappy also. In former years he had loved his brother, and he knew that he had been faithfully loved in return.

The trouble that had so unfortunately separated them had been trivial in its beginning; but Lowell's sternness of will and John's hastiness of temper had kept the fire increasing. The first fault had belonged to the younger brother, but a word of explanation at the time might have healed it without trouble; now, however, the affair had become deep and dangerous, and there was but one way for remedy. That way the aged mother would point out.

"Lowell," continued Mrs. Stearns, speaking in a trembling tone, "I can spend but a few short days longer on earth. I feel that the sands in my glass have almost all run out; but before I depart, I hope I may meet my two boys together in love. I hope I may see them once more bound together in the sweet bonds of friendship. When you were babes, I nursed you, and cared for you, and I tried to do a mother's duty. I tried to make you both fit for the great world. As you grew older, I promised myself a full share of happiness in your companionship, and sought has come to dim the joy of my widowed heart till this sad cloud lowered upon me. I love my children—I love them both alike; and yet they love not each other. Lowell, my son, one thing weighs heavily upon me. Should this thing last till I am dead—then how will you and your brother meet by the side of my corpse? How will you feel when you come to—"

"Hush, my mother!" uttered the stout man, trembling like a reed. "Say no more now. This evening I will speak to you my mind."

John Stearns sat in his easy chair in his own cosy parlour, and about him were his loved wife and children.

Everything that money could procure toward real comfort was his, but yet he was not happy. Amid all his comforts, there was one dark cloud to trouble him. The spot where for long years he had nurtured a brother's love, was now vacant—not, not vacant; for it was filled with bitterness. He knew that he was in fault; but he tried to excuse himself by thinking that his brother hated him. This, however, did not ease his conscience; for he knew that he was lying to himself.

While he sat thus, he heard a ring at the front door, and in a few moments one of the children told him that uncle Lowell wanted to see him.

"Tell him to come in," said John; and after this he made a motion for his wife and children to leave the room. "I shan't budge an inch," he muttered to himself. "If he thinks to frighten me, he'll find his mistake."

Before he could say more, his brother entered the room.

"Good evening, John," said Lowell; at the same time laying his hat on the table. John Stearns was taken all aback by this address, and he could hardly believe his ears; but he responded hesitatingly to the salutation. For an instant he looked up into his brother's face, and during that instant there flashed across his mind a wish that he had never given cause for offence.

"John," continued Lowell, still standing, "you well know what has passed to make us so very unhappy."

"Yes, I know," answered John, hardly knowing what tone to assume.

"Well, my brother," continued Lowell, while a tear glistened in his eye, and at the same time extending.

his hand, "I have come to bury the evil that has risen between us. If you have wronged me, I freely forgive you; and if I have been harsh and unbrotherly towards you, I ask that you will forget it. Come, let us be friends once more."

Like an electric shock came this speech upon the ears of John Stearns. A moment he stood half-wildered, and then the tears broke forth from his eyes. He reached forth his hand, but his words were broken and indistinct.

He had not expected this from his stern brother; but it came like a heaven-sent beam of light to his soul, and in a moment more the brothers were folded in a warm embrace.

When they were aroused, it was by feeling a trembling hand laid upon their heads; and when they looked up, they found their aged mother standing by them.

"Bless you, my children, bless you," murmured the white-haired parent, as she raised her hands towards heaven; "and, oh! I pray God that you may nevermore be unhappy."

John Stearns knew that his mother had been the angel who had touched the heart of his brother, and it did not alter his forgiveness.

"Oh," he murmured, "I have been very wrong; I have abused you, my brother; but if you can forgive me, I will try to make it all up."

"Your love will repay it all, John. Let me have your love, and I will try never to lose it more."

"Now I am truly happy," said the good mother, as she gazed with pride on her sons. "Now I can die in peace. O, my boys, if you would have your children sure of happiness in after life, teach them that forgiveness will heal social wounds, which can be healed in no other way. Many a heart has been broken from the simple want of such a talismanic power."

Both those brothers blessed their mother for the healthful lesson she had taught them, and they failed not to teach it to their children, as one of the best boons that could be given them for life.

S. C. J.

INDUSTRY.

THE first great lesson taught us by everything, animate and inanimate, in all nature is to continually do and strive. The patient bee in her hive, the indefatigable ant in his hill, the cunning beaver in his dam, the blind mole in his labyrinth burrow, everything in the whole universe, from the coral insect constructing, atom by atom, age after age, palaces and caverns, and mountains at the bottom of the great deep, to the untiring stars, in their grand courses, ever rushing, never ceasing; all the wonderful phenomena of nature are ever preaching to us eloquent sermons of the value, the utility, the beauty, and the necessity of activity and industry.

Action is the first great law of all things. Without it, there could be no change of seasons, no seed time, no harvest, no beautiful transformations from germs to flower, from flower to fruit! Without it, the ocean's "mighty minstrelsy" would be hushed; silent the "music of the spheres!" Without it, no white sailed, stately, courtly ships would make obeisance to the breeze, or bound over the laughing billows. Without it, the universe had never emerged out of the formless, silent, black, primeval chaos. Without it, there could be no warmth, no growth, no light, no sound, no life. Life is action. Let action be stopped, and darkness, the black jaws of never-ending night, would swallow up creation, and chaos would come again.

These things should teach us that we, responsible creatures, should be "up and doing," ever earnestly striving for the development of our faculties, the enlargement of our powers, and the increase of our usefulness to ourselves and our race; ever industriously engaged in some good and useful work.

"The little busy bees" ignominiously expel the drones from the scenes of their labours, and exclude them from the enjoyment of their labour's sweet products.

So ought mankind to do with the idlers—the drones—in the great human hive, this teeming, buzzing, bustling, busy world; and so, as a general thing, they do.

In one way or another, the idlers of our race, like the drones among the bees, are debarred, shut out from the best experiences and the sweetest enjoyments of life.

They sleep not the calm, unbroken sleep of the industrious; they dream not honest industry's sweet dream; they think not the proud and happy thoughts that are born of the ennobling consciousness of achievements won in duty's field, by patience, by fortitude, and by toil.

The daintiest viands, the costliest wines, the most delicate and luxurious fare, have not, for them, the zest which seasons the coarsest crust upon which the

sturdy, hearty labourer in the path of duty makes his meal, and feasts withal.

Labour overcomes all things. Wealth is a great boon, rightly used; beauty is much; brilliant natural gifts are much; genius is much; but industry utilized and makes effective and potent all of them; binds them to their true uses; bends them to the purposes for which they were designed; and, properly directed, makes them sources of pleasure and happiness to their possessor.

C. H. N.

TO A BEAUTIFUL CHILD.

I KNOW thee, fond one as thou art,
Young, and beautiful, and fair;
With sunlight resting on thy brow,
And on thy waving hair.

I smile to see thy radiant smile—
I weep to see thee weep;
And when I gaze on thee awhile,
Strange musings o'er me creep.

Say, art thou destined for this earth?
Or is thy form so light,
But fancy as it wanders on
Before my ravished sight?

Sweet child of budding innocence,
Thou art too fair for earth;
And wisely may I deem thee now
An angel in thy birth.

But still, as years glide swift away,
The false, deceitful art
Of those who are not what they seem,
May blight thy gentle heart.

'Tis vain for me to think
That thou wilt always be
So pure, so fair, so free from care,
For earth has charms for thee.

Still, let virtue guide thee on
Through paths of fadeless flowers;
And shield thee safe from every sin,
In pleasure's giddy hours.

R. T. E.

COLTSFOOT.

A YOUNG Dutch miller, a long while ago, having a taste for painting, amused himself in his hours of leisure by representing the landscape amid which he lived. The mill, the cattle of his master, the beautiful verdure, clouds, smoke, light or shade, were all portrayed with an exquisite touch.

This artist, it seems, became celebrated and a rich man, notwithstanding that he was once a poor miller. An artist of celebrity stopped at his inn, and, admiring the truth of the landscapes, offered a large sum, and promised to take all that this young man could produce.

The eye of the celebrated artist who made the purchase was not vulgar, for he could appreciate the genius of the poor miller, who was modest.

Who would believe that plants have the same fate as man; only they require a patron to appreciate them. The tussilage, or coltsfoot, would, perhaps, have for ever remained at the foot of Mount Pila, blooming in obscurity, if the great botanist, M. Villan de Grenoble, had not discovered and appreciated this little gem of the vegetable kingdom. Had it been the tall, majestic lily, whose graceful white flowers are towering upward to the skies, or the beautiful rose of Sharon, or the lily of the valley, which is spoken of by king Solomon, it then might have had many admirers.

But it was none of these consequential beauties of the floral world. No, no. Had it been the Peruvian heliotrope, whose lilac-coloured flowers continue to bloom nearly the whole year; or the tall magnolia, with its green, spreading leaves and pearly-white, fragrant blossoms that enraptures our senses upon approaching it, then the coltsfoot might have been overlooked.

The fragrance of the heliotrope is said by the Orientals to elevate their souls toward heaven; the odour is so strong and exhilarating that it produces intoxication. But the little flower which has excited our admiration is none of these majestic and towering plants of its kingdom that even excite the admiration of kings and the inspiration of poets. But it is a plain, diminutive, yellow flower, deriving its name from *tussis*, a cough for which the plant is reputed a remedy. It belongs to the composite family, and grows in clusters, as the violet, cowslip, mimosa, and many other plain flowers. To describe it minutely, it bears a beautiful yellow blossom, woolly when young, but very fragrant.

The botanist to whom we owe its discovery calls it the perfume-plant. It was first found at the foot of a hill, growing in obscurity, no eye to gaze upon its beauties but the great eye of Providence, which had transplanted it on the globe, and the eyes of angels whose watchful care is even attracted to flowers.

Here were beauty and elegance hidden at the foot of a mountain, whose soil was rarely trod by man; yet the spot was found, the flower was not gazed upon by "vulgar eyes," but glanced at by one of an appreciative mind, and one who said, "Justice shall be done you." Therefore, the botanist, Villan de Grenoble, knew how to appreciate the humble little flower of which we write. He gave it a distinguished rank in his works; and since then the tussilage has been cultivated with care, and perfumes as the violet, lily of the valley, and mignonette, every place or corner of the globe where it blooms. Its smiling blossoms peep up from the solitary nook, in the meadows, or in the cultivated gardens; it blooms at seasons when all other flowers have disappeared. Is not such a blossom worthy of all admiration and attention? Most assuredly it is.

Who does not love a flower?
Its hues are taken from the light
Which summer suns fling pure and bright,
In scattered and prismatic hues;
That smile and shine in dropping dew,
Its fragrance from the sweetest air;
Its form from all that's light and fair,
Who does not love a flower?

Can we not with pleasure cast our minds back to the days of youth, when we strayed through the meadow or wild wood, and heard the singing birds, and the hum of bees, gathering the wild flowers that grew on the bank or in the valley? Ah! yes—Linked with many fond associations may be the simplest flower.

They bring back to us a thousand bright recollections of sunny days and youthful hours, when a fair, unclouded future lay before us.

Ah! 'twas when we strolled the wild wood and the river's brink, watching the sparkling, dashing waves that came bursting almost at our feet, that we loved flowers.

Even on "the wild sea-bank" we fancy now we see the prickly cactus, whose species are many; it grows on the barren sand, fanned by the salt sea-breezes, as prolific as in a garden. How often we gathered them in our childish rambles!

Often when depression and sorrow dims our eyes with tears, and our mind wanders back to youth and innocence, to days when our hopes were bright, and joy sat on each feature, we call to mind the past, and feel as though we wish we were a flower to bloom but a season, then to pass away.

Such are, at times, the sad reflections of human nature. Yet we must not feel melancholy under any circumstances, but remember the words of our Saviour when he spoke of the flowers. He told his disciples to look at the lily; it toiled not, neither did it spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore we must bear in mind the words of the Good Book; also the Dutch miller who became a great artist, and the little flower whose fate has been compared by the botanist Grenoble to this obscure young man, who, from being a poor miller-boy, rose to eminence. It is said that though wealth and prosperity were his, the artist never forgot his dear mill, as is attested by the representation of it in many of his pictures, all of which are masterpieces of art. The miller might have breathed the lines of the poet, when he whispered as he viewed the hawthorn blossoms—

Fair Hope with light and buoyant form,
Came smiling through the clouds of care;
Glance bright defiance on the storm,
And hung the bow of promise there.

There is nothing so beautiful as a flower—one such as the magnolia, heliotrope, or narcissus, whose golden crown is in the centre of its pure white petals. As its fragrance comes forth on the zephyrs of the morning, one might imagine one's self on the Grecian isles, or among the Hindoo nymphs, who chant their hymns to the Indian Cupid; or, gazing on the robe of Helen, which is said to have been bordered with a wreath of acanthus.

There is more beauty in the floral world than is imagined by many persons. The language of flowers is truly eloquent. By a simple flower we can convey more than pages of manuscript could contain.

The unfortunate Boucher, when in solitary confinement, consoled himself by studying the flowers which his daughter collected for him. A few days previous to his death, he sent her two dead lilies, to express at the same time the purity of his soul and the fate which awaited him.

The most beautiful flowers are apt to engage our attention, but those whose qualities are superior are the ones which should claim our greatest interest. Such is the bright yellow tussilage, or coltsfoot, which has been our theme, whose humble flowers were discovered away on the foreign shores near Mount Pila, where, perhaps, it had bloomed unnoticed and uncared for many ages past.

Flowers, minerals, and human beings, each have their imperfections; but the most perfect must eventually be rewarded.

Gold will outshine dross, diamonds will eclipse paste; therefore, it is the genuine and beautiful that we all admire, whether it belongs to the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom.

The emblem of this obscure flower is "Justice shall be done you."

I will leave my readers to analyze in their minds the flower that I have but faintly described. Its beauty and fragrance far surpasses anything I have said in its favour. Such is the sweet tussilage, or coliflour.

They shall own thee sweetest and fairest of flowers, That smile in our woodlands or blush in our bowers; They shall own thee a lovelier gem of delight, Than they that illumine the veil of midnight.

S. A. W.

THE MASTERY OF LANGUAGES.

1. THAT the power of speaking foreign languages idiomatically may be attained with facility by adults without going abroad.

2. That sentences may be so formulated, in all languages, that, when they are thoroughly learned, the results evolved therefrom will in each new lesson double the number of idiomatic combinations previously acquired.

3. That the acquisition of unconnected words is comparatively worthless, because they have not that property of expansion.

4. That the preliminary study of grammar is unnecessary.

5. That the power of speaking other tongues idiomatically is attained principally by efforts of the memory, not by logical reasonings.

6. That the capacity of the memory for the retention of foreign words is universally over-estimated; and that every beginner ought, in reason, to ascertain by experiments the precise extent of his own individual power.

7. That inasmuch as a word, not perfectly retained by the memory, cannot be correctly reproduced, the beginner ought to restrict himself within the limit of his ascertained capacity.

8. That he should therefore avoid seeing or hearing one word in excess of those which he is actually engaged in committing to memory.

9. That the mere perusal of a grammar clogs the memory with imperfect recollections of words and fractions of words; and therefore it is interdicted.

10. That, nevertheless, the beginner who adopts this method will not fail to speak grammatically.

11. That the most notable characteristic of a child's process, is that he speaks fluently and idiomatically with a very small number of words.

12. That the epitome of language made by children, all the world over, is substantially the same.

13. That when a child can employ two hundred words of a foreign tongue, he possesses a practical knowledge of all the syntactical constructions, and of all the foreign sounds.

14. That every foreign language should therefore be epitomized for a beginner, by the framing of a set of strictly practical sentences, embodying two hundred of the most useful words, and comprising all the most difficult constructions.

15. That, by "mastering" such an epitome in the manner prescribed, a beginner will obtain the greatest possible results, with the smallest amount of exertion; whilst, at the same time, he will have abundant leisure to bestow upon the pronunciation that prominent attention to which it is entitled.

The course of nature combines analysis and synthesis, with a practical knowledge of all the constructions, and with a more sufficiency, instead of a superabundance of words. Idiomatic sentences become fixtures in the memory, and the analysis of them is so simple, that it is easily performed, even by young children. The latter have not, and they do not require, that critical power which educated men display in their investigations into the component parts of a new language, and the peculiar constructions thereof. The process is altogether different, and the soundness of the principle is obvious.

For sentences learned by rote gradually dissolve themselves, and become decomposed, when the words are severally used in other combinations, in the hearing of the child.

Thus, if he has learned the following five syllables, "Give me some of that," which to him are but one word or utterance, indivisible in the first instance, his attention is attracted by any portions of it, which he may chance to hear afterwards applied in a different manner, as "Give me that;" "I want some of that;" &c. He observes those variations, and by degrees he comprehends them, and employs them himself, not in supersession of the original sentence, but in addition to it. In this manner the analysis becomes, for all practical purposes, complete; and the meaning of the whole sentence becomes more and more clearly under-

stood. He cannot be said to understand each of the words thoroughly, but he uses them intelligently and accurately. He cannot assign a score of meanings to the preposition "of," but his ignorance is not inexcusable, and it is no bar to his progress.

Such is the analysis of nature, resulting from a series of observations and inferences, drawn by infants from the known to the unknown; from the whole to its parts.

The synthetic operation is merely the insertion of other words, one by one, into their appropriate niches in the sentences learned by rote. Each new word corresponds grammatically with that which it displaces. Thus, in the sentence above given he may introduce "him" instead of "me," and "those" instead of "that." The substitution of the right word, in the right form, without any knowledge of grammar, results from that instinct of imitation and repetition which operates universally in the unsophisticated minds of children.—*Thomas Prendergast.*

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.
Author of "The Jesuit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER CXIV.

"THAT'S your notion, young man! In these parts we reckon him a 'cute, clever fellow!'" observed Mr. Washington Somerville, in the tone of a man who had a right to feel personally offended. "Well, the Hope came down upon him at last, thinking to make a seizure—but it was no go! His papers were all in order, and not a head of black cattle on board!"

"You forget the middy," said Captain Vernon, "and the sailors who had first boarded him?"

"No, I don't," replied the ruffian, with a knowing wink.

"They must have witnessed his inhuman act?" continued the captain.

"Well, per—ha—ps they did," deliberately drawled the American. "I can't say *exactly* how it occurred—for, of course, I was not on board; but it is thought that he headed the Britishers and niggers in the same barrels, and sent them all over together!"

The commander of the Revenge half started from his seat, his eyes flashing fire, and his hand involuntarily grasping the hilt of his sword. A look from Franks restrained him.

"The heartless villain!" he muttered, between his clenched teeth, as, with a violent effort, he mastered his emotion; "should I fall in with him, he may expect no quarter!"

"The skipper of the Black Eagle never gives nor takes any," was the cool observation of the American; "you judge the affair like a Britisher!"

"I judge it like a man, sir," replied the indignant sailor.

"Ay, that is to say," continued his informant, "with all the prejudices of the old country. We are more enlightened in America. But then we are a young nation, and have just cut our wisdom teeth—England is shedding hers! Now," continued the speaker, "let us argue the affair: if the Britishers had not gone on board the Black Eagle, meddling where they had no concern, the captain would have run his cargo into Cuba!"

"Enough, sir," interrupted the commander of the Revenge; "I cannot argue on such principles."

"Beaten—beaten by chalks!" exclaimed Mr. Washington Somerville, with an air of triumph; "the case is clear—you haven't a leg to stand upon!"

"Possibly not," replied the captain, cooling down; "but I have a quarter-deck and a crew of gallant fellows under me; and I promise you that if the wretch we have been speaking of falls into my hands, he shall swing at the yard-arm, like a cowardly assassin as he is!"

A momentary scowl passed over the harsh features of the American, who seemed suddenly sobered by the emphatic declaration of the gallant sailor.

"Catch him first!" he added, with a forced laugh; "catch him first!"

"That, of course," observed his host. "But, my dear sir, pray oblige me by changing the subject! I am astonished that a gentleman of your standing and intelligence can justify such a monster."

At the words "gentleman" and "intelligence," both Fred and Dick exchanged glances of astonishment. In their generous indignation, they felt inclined to kick the ruffian from the room; but, as their commander not only endured him, but, from some unaccountable reason, appeared inclined to conciliate him, they restrained the expression of their feeling.

At a late hour their guests rose to depart. Acting up to the instructions they had received, both the young men parted from Franks as from an old and valued friend. Captain Vernon shook him warmly by the hand: it was evident that the disgust his companion had inspired did not extend to him.

They separated at the door of the hotel.

When the commander of the Revenge and his officers returned to the drawing-room, the former threw himself into his seat with the air of an actor heartily tired of the part he had been compelled to play.

Dick and Fred regarded him in silence.

"No doubt, boys," he observed, after a pause, "but you think the request I made in the theatre, and my conduct since, equally strange?"

They did not attempt to deny so self-evident a proposition.

"If you meet the young one," continued the speaker, "treat him as if he were really the friend of your boyhood; he deserves it!"

"And how are we to treat his companion?" inquired Dick, more and more puzzled to account for the conduct of his parent.

"As you would a wolf reeking from the slaughter of the fold," replied his father, in a stern tone; "as you would the captain of the Black Eagle, if you met him hand-to-hand upon the deck of the slaver."

A light suddenly broke upon both the young men. Wild and improbable as it may appear, they felt convinced that Mr. Washington Somerville was himself the hero of the fearful tale he had related.

"Hush!" said their commander; "the very walls in this city of slavery and piracy have ears! Not a word more upon the subject till we are afloat!"

"And then?" exclaimed Dick.

"Then," added his father, "the opportunity you so lately sighed for, of winning your epaulette, shall not be wanting."

The following morning, a young officer arrived with a letter from the commander of the Hope to Captain Vernon. It contained a detailed account of the crime committed on board the slaver—the cask containing the bodies of the unfortunate midshipman and the sailors having been washed on shore at Belize, had led to the discovery.

"And where is the Hope now?" inquired Captain Vernon of the messenger.

"At Savannah. We are ordered to Quebec, to receive the governor on board, who is recalled to England. The instructions of the commodore are imperative," added the speaker; "and my commander, fearing that he should be compelled to sail before you arrived to relieve him, took advantage of the steamer between the island and New Orleans, and sent me with this letter."

"And when do you return?"

"The packet starts in the morning."

"Then I will at once prepare my letters," observed Captain Vernon, rising to leave the room. "Allow me, Lieutenant Hastings, to introduce you to my nephew and son, who will do their best to entertain you!"

Fred was surprised at the name of Hastings.

"Is your name Charles?" he asked.

"At your service," replied the young man, slightly surprised.

"Then I am doubly happy to see you," said the brother officer, at the same time shaking him warmly by the hand.

He whispered a few words in the ear of Dick, who nodded, and quitted the apartment.

"Telegraphing!" thought the young sailor. "I wish I had their signal-book."

He could not comprehend the air of satisfaction with which his new friend continued to regard him; they had never met before—never, that he was aware of, had had each other named.

"You seemed inclined to mystify me, Mr. Vernon!" he observed, with a good-humoured smile.

"All fair, if I do," replied Fred; "for I can assure you once were the cause of anything but an agreeable mystification to me. But I bear no malice," he continued.

"Malice! I—really I cannot exactly comprehend you!"

"Nor is it necessary that you should; for five minutes imagine me your commanding officer, and follow my directions as implicitly as if they were issued from the quarter-deck, instead of an apartment in the Hotel Royal of New Orleans."

"Agreed!" replied Lieutenant Hastings, in the same tone of badinage.

"Advance to the window!" exclaimed Fred.

The young man was by his side.

"Do you see that fountain in the garden of the hotel?" continued the speaker, at the same time pointing to the object.

"Yes."

"Station yourself there till I come, and do not stir, as you value the smile of her you love, till I relieve you!"

"She whom I love is far away!" replied the young sailor, with a sigh.

"At Rio, perhaps?"

"Rio!" repeated the young lieutenant; "can it be possible? Are you acquainted with—"

"Mary is a very pretty name!" observed his tor-

mentor, with a smile; but it is no excuse for disobedience of orders! To the fountain, sir!" he added, in a tone of mock severity, "or I am dumb!"

"Only one word!"

"Not one!"

Lieutenant Hastings, scarcely knowing what to hope or fear, caught up his hat and quitted the room, to seek the appointed spot. He had not long to wait; voices were heard in the garden; amongst them was one whose well-remembered tones sent the warm blood to his heart, and the next moment Fred made his appearance at the end of the walk, with Mary Fitzgerald upon his arm.

Those who retain the memories of their youth—and we pity those who do not—may imagine the joy of the two lovers at this unexpected meeting. Fred felt that he was *de trop*, and left them under pretence of seeking Dick and Miss Hamilton, who were in another part of the garden. As he approached them, his countenance was radiant with smiles: the happiness he had imparted to others was reflected in his own manly heart.

"Soon back!" exclaimed the lover of the consul's ward, not altogether pleased at being so quickly disturbed in his *tête-à-tête*.

"Too soon, perhaps!" replied his friend, archly.

"What have you done with Mary?" inquired Miss Hamilton.

"Exchanged her."

"Exchanged her!"

"Yes, for a friend! You would have it I was Mary's lover—instead of which I have been only her confidant. She is in the next walk with Charles Hastings!"

"Charles Hastings!" repeated the young lady, at once comprehending the riddle. "Oh, Mary—Mary, how very blind I must have been!"

We need not say that the day was a happy one. Colonel Fitzgerald, indeed, looked rather blank when presented to his daughter's former suitor at dinner: but as the young man was to quit New Orleans the following morning, he thought it best to let matters take their course; added to which, he had lately received intelligence of his nephew in India, which rendered him less anxious for the match. A change of feeling which, with his usual diplomatic coolness, he kept to himself.

CHAPTER CXV.

You might have seen the frothy billows fry
Under the ship, as through the waves she went,
That seemed the waves were unto ivory,
Or ivory unto the waves were sent.

Spenser.

On leaving New Orleans, the Revenge had directed her course along the coast of Florida, between which point and St. Antonio she continued to cruise, leaving Cuba to the left, instead of making for Belize—as Captain Vernon had stated to Mr. Washington Somerville to be his intention.

All but Dick and Fred were puzzled to understand the motives of the commander in thus keeping the open sea, instead of proceeding at once to Havannah, where his ship had for some time been expected.

Three days after their departure, a long, narrow, rakish-looking vessel descended the Mississippi, and made for sea. She hoisted no colours, and was not even visited by the custom-house authorities. As she cut like a shark through the waters, the steamer from Havannah was seen in the distance, making towards the harbour.

No sooner did the captain of the suspicious-looking craft we have described perceive the packet than he ordered his boat to be lowered, and pulled towards her. Apparently he was expected—for the steamer, which carried the Spanish ensign, stopped in her course, to enable him to board her.

The new comer—who was no other than the reader's old acquaintance, the American planter—nodded familiarly to the officer upon deck, and descended without ceremony to the cabin of his commander, whom he found lazily extended upon a pile of cushions, inhaling the fragrance of a cigar.

"Well, captain!" he said, "what news of the Britshers?"

"The Hope has sailed," was the reply.

"May she founder in the first gale!" exclaimed Somerville—or rather Michael Granton—for that was the real name of the captain of the Black Eagle; "she cost me two cargoes within the last twelvemonth!"

"Fortunately she did not cost you your ship," observed the Spaniard; "that last affair was an awkward one!"

"You mean the middy," said the American, with a grin. "Pah! the sea is a true confidant and tells no tales; and as for my ship, I defy them! Thanks to our friend, the consul at Belize, my papers are always regular: not a land shark in any court of Admiralty in the islands could find a flaw in them! But it's not about the Hope I am anxious to learn," he added; "it's about the Revenge!"

"Not yet been seen upon the station. You may land your cargo in safety. How many have you?"

"Only four hundred," replied the slaver. "Fifty—worth five hundred dollars a head at the very least—have gone to fatten the alligators in the Mississippi, all through those infernal Britshers; but I'll be even with them one day," he added.

"The best way to be even with them," observed the captain of the steamer, "is to make as many runs as you can before a fresh cruiser appears upon the station."

"She is on it already," observed the American.

"You jest!"

"It was a jest," continued the ruffian. "I met the captain of the Revenge by accident at New Orleans, and passed the evening with him—such a poor milk-and-water critter! I squeezed him," he added, at the same time extending his hand and clutching it, "like a sponge, till I had got all I wanted to learn out of him! The fool is off to Belize—thinks to fall in with me there! Catch an alligator asleep!"

After a further interchange of civilities, the captain of the slaver and the Spanish mail packet separated—the former on his way to Cuba, the latter to New Orleans.

The reason why the commander of the Black Eagle had not disposed of his cargo in New Orleans was a very simple one: the slaves would fetch double the price at Havannah.

When Michael Granton returned to his own vessel, he was informed by the young man who we lately introduced to our readers under the name of Franks, that seven more of the unhappy wretches in the hold were dead.

"Curse them!" replied the brute, with a fearful oath; "cast them overboard!"

"The stench in the hold is really dreadful," observed his informant, shocked at his inhumanity. "Might not the hatches be raised, to give them air?"

"Would you poison me?" demanded the slaver. "Well, after all," he added, "you Britshers are but a chicken-hearted lot! Like the old country—worn out—breed and bone! Now, them," he added, extending his arm, "them's what I calls muscles—and no mistake about the matter; not an ounce of fat—hard as iron!"

Poor Franks mentally thought that the heart of the speaker—if he had such a thing—was harder still.

"Now, my men," continued the speaker, addressing his crew, "sick's the word! Set every inch of sail the Black Eagle will bear! If this weather lasts, we shall make but a short run of it."

Seating himself upon the carriage of one of the guns—a long carronade—the commander of the slaver lit his cigar; and as the Black Eagle cut like an arrow through the foaming billows, from time to time called to the helmsman to direct the course of the vessel.

As Franks proceeded to the forecastle of the ship, to give some necessary orders to the men, a young sailor, whose features were bronzed by the sun of the south, touched his cap to him.

"Well, Willie, what is the matter?" he inquired, in an undertone.

"The wind is rising, sir."

"So I perceive."

"And has veered two points to the east," continued the lad, "within the last half hour. We shall have a storm, sir—I am sure we shall. Such a one as wrecked us on the coast of Brazil a year since, and cast us naked and helpless into the power of these wretches!"

"Prudence, Willie," whispered the young man, who evidently acted as an officer on board the slaver; "we are not without hope!"

The boy sighed, and, with a heavy heart, turned to resume his duty.

The prediction of a storm proved a correct one. The sun sank behind a mass of dark, threatening clouds, which rapidly obscured the heavens, and the wind began to whistle in the cordage, and rattle the sails of the slaver, as if it meant mischief. The waves danced madly round the hull, as it scudded before the breeze, dashing the white foam from her slender bows.

"Brace round the foreyard! Set the jib! That's it!" roared the captain, through his speaking trumpet; "down with the helm, and let her have plenty of stern-way!"

Franks executed the orders of his superior with an alacrity which indicated he felt the danger of their position.

Nothing but the excellent sailing qualities of the Black Eagle, and the skill and courage both of the commander and crew, could have rode out that fearful night. The broad flashes of lightning at times enveloped the ship in a blaze, and rendered their perils yet greater by displaying more vividly the horrors which surrounded them the sea, mad with fury,

dashing its snow-crowned billows with the force of an avalanche against the sides.

The ship rose and pitched fearfully; poor Willie expected every instant that she would go down in one of the enormous furrows which each wave, as it broke, left on the bosom of the angry waters.

The cries of the wretched negroes—chained under hatches—added to the terrors of the scene; in the event of the Black Eagle being lost, the unhappy creatures had not even a chance for life—her cargo was certain to perish with her.

"Curse their whoring!" roared Captain Granton, addressing the mate; "the men can't bear my orders!"

"It's the women," observed the petty officer—a grey-headed old ruffian, the greater portion of whose life had been passed in the slave trade; "them as has piccaninny," he added. "The same thing happened when I served on board the Star of Freedom—just such another gale as this. We had no peace till we cracked the little black devils overboard!"

"Can't stand that, nohow," answered his commander; "lost too many head of cattle already! Cost too much!"

A terrific peal of thunder broke over the ship; so fearfully was it prolonged, that even the Yankee slave-dealer was appalled: it sounded like the indignant denials of heaven of his right to barter and treat his fellow-men like beasts.

"I'd give a dozen of the likeliest of the cargo," he added, after a pause, "to see the Black Eagle safe in harbour!"

"The bargain would not be dear at two dozen!" dryly observed the mate. "If the wind does not go down, we shall all be in Davy's locker afore eight bells!"

The wind did not go down; the seething foam continued to be blown over the vessel in showers, whilst the curling masses of the roaring waves hissed and lashed themselves with redoubled fury.

One of the men muttered that the ship was lost. "Coward and liar!" exclaimed Captain Granton, striking the poor fellow a terrible blow over the face with his speaking trumpet; "the Black Eagle will float long after your lazy bones are bleached at the bottom of the sea! I'd carry her through," he added, "if Satan himself rode upon the howling tempest, and directed its belching fire against us!"

Then it was that the commander of the slaver displayed a seamanship worthy of a better cause. Taking the helm, he ordered the man to assist the rest of the crew at the fore, and issued his orders with a precision and skill which proved him to be equal to the emergency; but even his efforts must have proved unavailing, had not the young Englishman seconded him with a courage inferior only to his own. He was seen one moment balanced at the extremity of some slender spar; the next, assisting the crew to take in the shattered sail, which flapped heavily against thereaking mast.

As morning approached, the Black Eagle got before the wind, which, for an hour or more whistled and howled after her like some fury, disappointed of its prey. At last it slackened, and the sea began to go down.

"Saved!" said Granton, resigning the helm to the second mate, and at the same time wringing the salt spray from his long black locks, which hung like torpil snakes down his weather-beaten neck.

An involuntary "thank God!" broke from the lips of several of the men.

(To be continued.)

PROCEEDINGS IN BANKRUPTCY.—In April last the Lord Chancellor, displeased with the accounts of the official assignees and messengers of the Court of Bankruptcy for the Leeds district, requested Mr. Commissioner Ayrton, one of the commissioners there, and Mr. Harding, the well-known London accountant, to institute a rigid examination and scrutiny of all their books, and to report to him on the subject. The result of this investigation turned out to be of so very lamentable a character that his lordship, immediately it was made known to him, followed up his request by issuing an order directing a similar proceeding as to the accounts of every official assignee and messenger in all the districts courts in the country, with power also to inquire into the manner in which the bills of costs were taxed by the registrars of the various courts. We believe the inquiry under this order has been completed so far as regards the courts at Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool; and the result is that, besides the discovery of many very gross irregularities, it has been found that large sums of money have been improperly retained, both by the official assignees and by the messengers, which ought to have been paid over to the Chief Registrar's account—sums, we are told, already amounting in the aggregate to upwards of £14,000. The executors at Leeds and Birmingham were, we believe

completed in time to be communicated to the Parliamentary Committee on Bankruptcy; and as the evidence taken before that committee, and an appendix containing a variety of documents that were called for, will be printed in the course of a few days, the public will soon have an opportunity of forming a judgment on the importance of the inquiry directed by the Lord Chancellor, and still in course of prosecution, and on the disclosures which have hence come to light. If all we hear be true, we are only afraid that his lordship will very generally be considered to have been but too lenient with the offenders—to have erred on the side of mercy. We believe it is his lordship's intention that the inquiry shall be extended to the accounts of the official assignees and messengers acting in London.

ANCIENT AND MODERN HUMBUGS OF THE WORLD.

NO. 13.—THE PRINCESS CARIBOO; OR, THE QUEEN OF THE ISLES.

BRISTOL was, in 1812, the second commercial city of Great Britain, having in particular an extensive East India trade. Among its inhabitants were merchants, reckoned remarkably shrewd, and many of them very wealthy; and quite a number of aristocratic families. On the whole, Bristol was a very fashionable, rich, cultivated, and intelligent place.

One fine evening in the winter of 1812-13, the White Lion Hotel, a leading inn at Bristol, was thrown into a wonderful flutter by the announcement that a very beautiful, and fabulously wealthy lady, Princess Cariboo, had just arrived by ship from an oriental port. Her agent, a swarthy and wizened little Asiatic, who spoke imperfect English, gave this information, and ordered the most sumptuous suite of rooms in the house.

Of course, there was great activity in all manner of preparations; and the mysterious character of this lovely, but high-born stranger, caused a wonderful flutter of excitement, which grew and grew until the fair stranger at length designed to arrive.

She came about ten o'clock, in great state, and with two or three coaches packed with servants and luggage—the former of singularly dingy complexion and fantastic vestments, and the latter of the most curious forms and material imaginable.

The eager anticipations of host and guests alike were not only fully justified, but even exceeded by the rare beauty of the unknown, the oriental style and magnificence of her attire and that of her attendants, and the enormous bulk of her baggage—a circumstance that has no less weight at an English inn than anywhere else. The stranger, too, was most liberal with her fees to the servants, which were always in gold.

It was quickly discovered that her ladyship spoke not one word of English, and even her agent—a dark, wild, queer little fellow—got along with it but indifferent, preferring all his requests in very "broken China" indeed. The landlord thought it a splendid opportunity to create a long bill, and got up rooms and a dinner in flaring style, with wax candles, a mob of waiters, ringing of bells, and immense ceremony. But the lady, like a real princess, while well enough pleased and very gracious, took all this as matter of course, and preferred her own cook, a flat-faced, pug-nosed, yellow-breeched, and almond-eyed Oriental, with a pigtail dangling from his scalp, which was shaved clean, excepting at the back of the head. This gentleman ran about in the kitchen-yard with queer little brass utensils, wherein he concocted sundry diabolical preparations—as they seemed to the English servants to be—of herbs, rice, curry-powder, &c., &c., for the repast of his mistress. For the next three or four days, the White Lion was in a state bordering upon frenzy, at the singular deportment of the "princess" and her numerous attendants. The former strayed herself in the most astonishing combinations of apparel that had ever been seen by the good gossips of Bristol, and the latter indulged in gymnastic antics and vocal chanting that almost deafened the neighbourhood. There was a peculiar nasal ballad in which they were fond of indulging, that commenced about midnight and kept up until well nigh morning, that drove the neighbours almost beside themselves. It sounded like a concert by a committee of infuriated cats, and wound up with protracted whining notes, commencing in a whimper, and then, with a sudden jerk, bursting into a loud, monotonous howl. Yet, within, these attendants, who slept on mats, in the rooms adjacent to that of their mistress, and fed upon the preparations of her own cuisine, were, in the main, very civil and inoffensive, and seemed to look upon the princess with the utmost awe.

The agent, or secretary, or prime minister, or whatever he might be called, was very mysterious as to the objects, purposes, history, and antecedents of her Highness, and the quidnuncs were in despair, until

one morning, the *Bristol Mirror* came out with a flaring announcement, expressing the pleasure it felt in acquainting the public with the fact that a very eminent and interesting foreign personage had arrived from her home in the remotest East, to proffer His Majesty George III., the unobstructed commerce and friendship of her realm, which was as remarkable for its untold wealth as for its marvellous beauty. The lady was described as a befitting representative of the loveliness and opulence of this new Golconde and Ophir in one, since her matchless wealth and munificence were approached only by her ravishing personal charms. The other papers took up the topic, and were even more extravagant. *Felix Farley's Journal* gave a long narrative of her wanderings and extraordinary adventures in the uttermost East, as gleaned, of course, from her garrulous agent. The island of her chief residence was described as being of vast extent and fertility, immensely rich and populous, and possessing many rare and beautiful arts unknown to the nations of Europe. The princess had become desperately enamoured of a certain young Englishman of high rank, who had been shipwrecked on her coast, but had afterwards escaped, and, as she learned, safely reached a port in China, and thence departed for Europe. The princess had hereupon set out upon her journeys over the world in search of him. In order to facilitate her enterprise, and softened by the deep affection she felt for the son of Albion, she had determined to break through the usages of her country, and form an alliance with that of her beloved.

Such were the statements everywhere put in circulation; and when the Longbows of the place got hold upon them, Gulliver, Peter Wilkins, and Sinbad the Sailor were completely eclipsed. Diamonds as big as hen's eggs, and pearls the size of hazel nuts, were said to be the commonest buttons and ornaments the princess wore, and her silks and shawls were set beyond all price.

The announcement of this romantic and mysterious history, this boundless wealth, this interesting mission from majesty to majesty in person, and the reality which every one could see of so much grace and beauty, supplied all that was wanting to set the upper tandem of the place in a blaze. It was hardly etiquette for a royal visitor to receive much company before having been presented at Court; but as this princely lady came from a point so far outside of the pale of Christendom and its formalities, it was deemed not out of place to show her befitting attentions; and the ice once broken, there was no arresting the flood. The aristocracy of Bristol vied with each other in seeing who should be first and most extravagant in their demonstrations. The street in front of the White Lion was day after day blocked up with elegant equipages, and her reception-rooms thronged with "fair ladies and brave men." Milliners and mantua-makers pressed upon the lovely and mysterious Princess Cariboo the most exquisite hats, dresses, and laces, just to acquaint her with the fashionable style, and solicit her distinguished patronage; dry-goodsmen sent her rare patterns of their costliest and richest stuffs; perfumers their most exquisite toilet-cases, filled with odours sweet; jewellers, their most superb sets of gems, and florists and visitors nearly suffocated her with the rarest and most delicate exotics. Pictures, sketches, and engravings, oil-paintings, and portraits on ivory of her rapturous admirers, poured in from all sides, and her own fine form and features were reproduced by a score of artists. Daily she was feted, and nightly serenaded, until the Princess Cariboo became the *furore* of the United Kingdom.

Magnificent entertainments were given her in private mansions; and at length, to cap the climax, Mr. Worrall, the Recorder of Bristol, managed, by his influence, to bring about for her a grand municipal reception in the town-hall, and people from far and near thronged to it in thousands.

In the meantime, the papers were gravely trying to make out whether the Cariboo country meant some remote portion of Japan, or the Island of Borneo, or some comparatively unfamiliar archipelago in the remotest East, and the *Mirror* was publishing type expressly cut for the purpose of representing the characters of the language in which the princess spoke and wrote. They were certainly very uncouth; and pretended sages, who knew very well that there was no one to contradict them, declared that they were "ancient Coptic."

Upon reading the sequel of the story, one is irresistibly reminded of the ancient Roman inscription discovered by one of Dickens' characters, which some irreverent rogue subsequently declared to be nothing more nor less than "Bill Stumps His Mark."

All this went on for about a fortnight, until the whole town and a good deal of the surrounding country had made complete fools of themselves, and only the "naughty little boys" in the streets held out against the prevailing mania, probably because they

were not admitted to the sport. Their salutations took the form of an inharmonious thoroughfare-ballad, the chorus of which terminated with:

Boo! hoo! hoo!
And who's the Princess Cariboo?

yelled out at the top of their voices.

At length, one day, the luggage of her highness was embarked upon a small vessel to be taken round by water to London, while she announced, through her "agent," her intention to reach the capital by post-coaching.

Of course, the most superb travelling-carriages and teams were placed at her disposal; but, courteously declining all these offers, she set out in the night-time with a hired establishment, attended by her retinue.

Days and weeks rolled on, and yet no announcement came of the arrival of her highness at London, or at any of the intervening cities after the first two or three towns eastward of Bristol.

Inquiry began to be made; and, after a long and patient but unavailing search, it became apparent to divers and sundry dignitaries in the old town that somebody had been very particularly "sold."

The landlord at the White Lion, who had accepted the agent's orders for £1,000 on a Calcutta firm in London; poor Mr. Worrall, who had been master of ceremonies at the town-hall affair, and had spent large sums of money; and the tradespeople and others, who had sent their finest goods—all felt that they had "heard something drop."

The Princess Cariboo had disappeared as mysteriously as she came!

For years, the people of Bristol were unmercifully ridiculed throughout the entire kingdom on account of this affair; and burlesque songs and plays immortalized its incidents for successive seasons.

One of these insisted that the princess was no other than an actress of more notoriety than repute, humbly born in the immediate vicinity of the old city, where she practised this gigantic hoax; and that she had been assisted in it by a set of dissolute young noblemen and actors, who furnished the money she had spent, got up the Oriental dresses, published the fibs, and fomented the excitement. At all events, the net profit to her and her confederates in the affair must have been some £10,000.

The Princess Cariboo now ranks in the popular mythology of Bristol with the "King of the Cannibal Islands."

P. T. B.

(To be continued.)

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

It is said that if the largest pip in an apple be sown, the fruit will be similar to that of the parent tree without grafting; and that the cabbage seed gathered from the middle flower stem produces plants which will be fit for use a fortnight earlier than those from the seed of the lateral flower stems.

ON THE RESPIRATION OF FLOWERS.—M. Cahours, in a note to the French Academy of Sciences, says, that while the green parts of plants, under the influence of light, absorb carbonic acid, assimilate the carbon, and give out oxygen, the coloured parts, on the contrary, under the same circumstances, absorb oxygen, and give out carbonic acid. The amount of carbonic acid evolved seemed to increase as the temperature rose; and a growing flower gave out more than a fully blown one.

THERE is every probability that the important step of throwing open Southwark Bridge has been finally decided. At the meeting of the Southwark authorities held in the City, it was resolved to try a year's experiment, and it must be clear that the bridge could not be again burdened with a toll. This is preliminary to the entire abolition of tolls on the bridges between London Bridge and Putney, which soon must take place.

ROYAL ARSENAL, WOOLWICH.—In accordance with instructions given from the War Office, the issue of tickets by the heads of departments at the Royal Arsenal, to enable the public to view the establishment, is ordered to be discontinued; and for the future such tickets will be issued only by the Secretary of State for War, and Brigadier-General St. George, Director-General of Ordnance.

THE prizes have at length been awarded to the English riflemen who went to the Belgian shooting-match. We find the following have gained prizes:—In the Hon. Artillery Company, Captain Field, 2 prizes, one for bull's-eyes and the other for points; Private Houghton, prize for bull's-eyes; Mr. Kerr, London Scottish, 2nd best bull's-eyes; Captain Hanter, 19th Middlesex, prize for bull's-eyes; Corporal Russell, of Ashford, the same; Lieutenant Burt, 1st Warwick, the same.

OYSTER EXHIBITION.—Doctor Anatol Gillet de Grenniot is engaged in giving a series of lectures on maritime culture at the Jardin d'Acclimatation in the Bois de Boulogne, Paris, and one of the lectures being on ostraculture, an invitation was addressed to the proprietors of the great oyster beds of Regnéville, the Isle of Tréty, Concarneau, La Rochelle, the Isle of Ré, Marennes, Arcachon, and other places, to send each not less than twelve dozen of oysters for public exhibition on the occasion. A report is to be made thereon and published in the journals.

FACETIE.

SPORTING.—A young nobleman has lately expressed a most decided opinion that he can't help help winning next year's Derby. It is expected that his lordship will run riot on the occasion.

A COUNTRY correspondent suggests that the encounter between Mac and Coburn should have been fixed to come off in Scotland, because it was a run-away match.

OR-THOGRAPHY.—"You must be fined," said the Alderman, "for selling oysters in a month that has no R in it." "Please your honour," replied the oysterman, "I spells it O-r Or, g-u-s-t gust, Orgust." The man was excused.

TOO SHORT FOR THE PRICE.—A man hired an over-cute fellow to saw a load of wood, agreeing to pay him sixpence an hour. He showed him a specimen of the shortest stove wood; but the fellow turned on his heel, declaring "he was not quite so green as to saw wood, short as that, for sixpence an hour!"

NOT SO VERY LATE.

"Joe, where were you so late last night?"
"I wasn't so very late—only a quarter of twelve."
"How dare you sit there and say that? I was awake when you came in, and it was three o'clock."
"Well, isn't three a quarter of twelve?"

IF twenty grains make a scruple, how many will make a doubt? If seven days make one week, how many will make one strong? If five and a half yards make a pole, how many will make a Turk? If four quarters make a yard, how many will make a garden?

"Ah, sir," said the minister, "I am a clergyman." "That may be," responded Boniface; "but you came here smoking like a sinner, slept like a sinner, and ate and drank like a sinner; and now, sir, you shall pay like a sinner." And he was compelled to hand over the money.

"You say," said the Judge to a German who was tried for bigamy, "the clergyman who married you to your first wife authorised you to take sixteen. What do you mean by that?" "Vell," said Hans, "he told me dat I should have four penter, four verser, four richer, and four hoorer—and in our country four dimes four make sixteen."

THIRTEEN is an unlucky number. So thought the policeman, A 1, in the service of the Pope, who, having netted thirteen pickpockets the other day, released one of them, because thirteen was an unlucky number. Things must be well ordered in the Roman Bazaar.

AN ORPHAN WANTED.—At a weekly meeting of the St. Luke's Board of Guardians, held lately, a letter was read from a gentleman in the neighbourhood of the City Road, setting forth that he had been requested, on behalf of a lady of property, to ask if the board had a "complete orphan," with blue eyes and flaxen hair, not more than two years of age, and of gentle manner, to be given up to be adopted—the lady agreeing to take such a child, educate her as a lady should be educated, and finally to will over £300 per annum. The letter was referred to the house and visiting committee, to see if there might be a "blue-eyed, flaxen-haired, complete orphan in the union."

A WIFE OR A LIFE.—Scott, of Harden, one of the ancestors of Walter Scott, was a famous border thief, and at one time, when he had either spoiled the neighbouring English of all their cattle, or had frightened them all away, he began to fear that from disuse he might become less expert at the honourable trade he pursued; and to keep his hand in, amused himself with driving the cattle of one of his own countrymen and neighbours, Murray, of Elibank. Murray soon found the means of revenging himself, and brought Scott, his followers, his cattle, &c., all prisoners to Elibank Castle. On the walls was sitting his wife, who, perceiving the train that followed him, asked what he meant to do with Scott. "Why, hang him, to be sure," was the answer. The more prudent wife exclaimed, "What, hang such a winsome man as Harden when we have three such sorry damsels at home?" Murray was persuaded by his wife, and sending for one of his daughters, whose ugly face and

immense mouth, had acquired her the name of Mag-o-mouth Murray, proposed to Scott to marry her, leaving him no other alternative but a halter. The unfortunate prisoner most ungallantly refused the lady; and the tradition says that it was not till the rope was tied to the tree, and he began to feel it tighten, that he repented. He was married, and sorrowfully bent his steps homewards, taking with him his ugly wife.

THREE STORIES.

Freddy had him there, as this story will show: Freddy is a little one of seven years' growth, the son of a minister, who, with his wife, had just arrived at a new field of labour. Hearing his mother say to his father that she had been deceived by his saying that the parsonage was a three-story building, when, in fact, it was only two, he said:

"Ma."

"Well, Freddy."

"Pa is right."

"How so, Freddy?"

"The kitchen is one."

"Yes."

"The floor is two."

"Yes."

"And the story that pa told is three."

"How do you do, sir?" "I am busy just now." "Oh, if you are too busy to hear me privately, perhaps you will do so publicly." "Proceed," said B—, writing away. "Did you, or did you not, sir, as a gentleman and a man of honour, say I was no gentleman?" B—, looking up, and addressing his letter, replied, "As a gentleman and a man of honour, I never did say such a thing; but oh, how often have I thought it!"

A SONG OF GREENBACKS.

Sing a song of greenbacks,
A pocket full of straw:
Four-and-twenty millions—
Flung away in war;
When the war was opened—
The notes began to fly;
Wasn't that a dainty sight
For such poor chaps as I?
Chase was in the treasury—
Counting out the money;
Lincoln in the White House,
Was eating bread and honey;
McClellan on the battle-field
Was following our foes—
There came along a black-bird,
And nipped off his nose.

WILKES having prepared himself on one occasion to speak in the house of Commons on a question interesting to the popular feelings at the period in which he lived, found great difficulty in making himself heard. At last he called out to the Speaker at the loudest pitch of his voice, "Mr. Speaker, all the clamour and opposition to my speaking will avail nothing. Speak, sir, I must, for my speech has been given to the *Public Advertiser* these six hours, and is probably by this time in the press." This address put the House in good humour, and he was immediately heard with great attention. A good idea for some Members of Parliament of the present day.

NO CHANCE FOR HIM.

Once on a time, a French doctor came to Damascus to seek his fortune. When he saw the luxurious vegetation, he said:

"This is the place for me—plenty of fever."

And then on seeing the abundance of water, he said:

"More fever—no place like Damascus."

When he entered the town, he asked the people:

"What is this building?"

"A bath."

"And what is that building?"

"A bath."

"And that other building?"

"A bath."

"Oh!" exclaimed the physician, "I was mistaken; these baths will take the bread out of my mouth. I must seek fever practice elsewhere."

AN ELOPEMENT.—On our way from Wem to Hawkstone we passed a house, of which Mr. Lee told me the following occurrence:—A young lady, the daughter of the owner of the house, was addressed by a man, who, though agreeable to her, was disliked by her father. Of course he could not consent to their union, and she determined to elope. The night was fixed, the hour came, he placed the ladder to the window, and, in a few minutes, she was in his arms. They mounted a double horse, and were soon at some distance from the house. After a while the lady broke silence by saying—"Well, you see what a proof I have given you of my affection; I hope you will

make me a good husband." He was a surly fellow and gruffly answered—"Perhaps I may, and perhaps not." She made him no reply; but after a silence of some minutes, she suddenly exclaimed—"Oh, what shall we do? I have left my money behind me in my room." "Then," said he, "we must go back and fetch it." They were soon again at the house, the ladder was again placed, the lady remounted, while the ill-natured lover waited below. But she delayed to come; so he gently called out, "Are you coming?" when she looked out of the window, and said—"Perhaps I may, and perhaps not;" then shut down the window, and left him to return on the double horse alone.

At a recent archiepiscopal dinner, it is reported that the archbishop, addressing the Bishop of Cork, said, "Although you have been made Bishop of Cork, you should not neglect to pass the bottle." To which the Bishop of Cork replied, "I see you want to draw me out." This is not what occurred; if it were, it would not be worth the telling, for it would be only a very trite and hackneyed repartee. What really occurred was this:—"My lord of Cork," said Archbishop Whately, "you stop the bottle." "If I do," replied John of Cork, "I ought to be screwed."

A BRIGHT BOY.

"Pa, will roots grow?"

"Yes, my son, generally, if they are fresh and good."

"Then I'm going to plant this arrow root, and raise all the arrows we want for the cheiarchy tournament next fall. Mr. Jallap says it's fresh and good."

"Go ahead, my son. You will be in a quiver, though, before your crop is harvested."

A HINT TO THE NORTHERN GENERALS.—As the "darkies" in the Northern army are treated and spoken to in such a mild and flattering manner by their officers, being sometimes addressed as "scoundrels," &c., might not one of the "words of command" to them very appropriately be found in an advertisement so frequently seen in our newspapers, "Fire, thieves, fire?"—*Fun.*

The late Marquis of Lansdowne always loved to see his servants and those about him enjoy themselves thoroughly, and he would occasionally stroll past the servants' hall and delight in listening to their unsophisticated merriment. One Sunday he was passing at the dinner hour, when he heard them give their usual Sabbath toast, "The health of our noble master." After this had been received with due honour, "And now," said a voice, "let us drink to our noble selves." Upon which the old marquis put his head in at the door, and, much to their surprise, called out, "A pretty noble set of you, indeed!"

WHAT IRISHMEN DO!—George Penn Johnson, one of our most eloquent stamp speakers, who loves a good thing too well to let it slip upon any occasion, addressing a meeting where it was a great point to obtain the Irish vote, after alluding to the native American party in no flattering terms, inquired, "Who dug our canals? Irishmen. Who build our railroads? Irishmen. (Great applause.) Who build all our gaols? Irishmen. (Still greater applause.) Who fill all our gaols? Irishmen!" This capping climax, if it did not bring down the house, did the Irish, in a rush for the stand. Johnson did not wait to receive them.

TO BED—TO BED.—There was a half foolish fellow, living at one of the principal hotels in the city of —, by the name of George, doing the chores, such as running errands, carrying water, &c. The boarders at the house were always bothering him, trying to scare him, and such like. One night, after he went to bed, some of the boarders, sitting in the coffee-room, determined to have some fun at his expense. So, when they thought he had got fairly settled, one of them gets a sheet and winds it round his person, so as to appear as much as possible like a ghost, and then started to George's room, opened the door softly, and stepped up to the foot of the bed, and said, in as solemn a tone as he could command, "I am thy father's ghost." "Waal, if you be, you better go to bed, and not make such a noise about it," was the reply. The ghost decamped.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE AND THE SOLDIER.—*Apropos* of the recent official inspection of Dover garrison by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, we are reminded of an *on dit* respecting him which we are disposed to give for what it is worth. As the story goes, the duke was on one occasion passing about among the men in barracks here, and was inquiring, as is his wont, if they had any complaints to make. None had any grievances to tell, save one, who was known to his comrades as a habitual grumbler, and who complained that the rations served out to him were not fit to be eaten. "Very well, we will see," said the duke; and ordering the soldier's dinner to be brought, he sat down and discussed the viands with an appetite that would have done credit to

a farmer. When he had finished, he sharply rebuked the astonished soldier, and told him he had been well punished by the loss of his dinner. The affair became a standing joke in the regiment, and the luckless grumbler found himself placed in anything but an enviable position.

SOMETHING SPICY ABOUT MACE.—Jem Mace and his friends, we hear, lately wished to charter a West Indian steamer for their pugilistic purposes. The Steam Company, however, objected, on the ground that the boat was only used for carrying the Pacific Maces.—*Punch.*

CONSIDERATE—VERY

Mister George (alluding to the New Governess, who happened to be within hearing): "Cross, disagreeable old thing, I call her!"

Miss Caroline: "Oh, Georgy! but we ought to give way to her; recollect, dear, she's a very awkward age!"

QUESTION FOR THE PEACE SOCIETY.—Say the accounts, "The Federal cavalry force has exactly doubled this campaign." If the man deserves honour who makes two blades of grass wave where there was but one, what shall be said unto the man who does the same by two blades of steel?—*Punch.*

THE SHEQUESTRANT.—By Mr. E. T. Smith's lucid advertisement, we are informed that "the price of the upper boxes has been reduced to 1s. 6d., to wear bonnets and undress. This last arrangement is doubtless out of compliment to the unadorned beauty on the stage. The above notice must be taken as a warning, on the part of the thoughtful lessee, to all ladies, who might otherwise have been misled into giving their blushing countenances to this remarkable exhibition."—*Punch.*

INTERESTING INTERVIEW.

We had the pleasure of reading in the French journals that: "The Empress of the French returned to St. Cloud in time to give an interview to Prince Humbert, who subsequently left Paris for Italy." What passed at this interesting interview was as follows:—

The Empress (to the Prince on his entering): Good evening, Prince, I hope that you are quite well?

The Prince (bowing): Perfectly well, I thank your Majesty.

The Empress: The evenings close in early now.

The Prince: They do, at this time of the year, your Majesty.

The Empress: And I think it is growing colder.

The Prince: I seem conscious of a certain coldness, your Majesty.

The Empress: I must not detain you, Prince, from the attractions of Paris, as your time is so limited, and as I am a little fatigued with a journey which (nec intention) I was obliged to hurry—

The Prince: I have the honour to wish your Majesty good evening and repose.

[*Bows, and exit—then, outside, to his equerry:* Now for some fun, you sober old sinner.

The Empress (to the Emperor): I have received the interesting Piedmontese, Sire.

Louis Napoleon: Humph!—*Punch.*

A VEGETABLE HAIR-DYE.—The Paris Correspondent of the *Post* informs us that numerous pretty young ladies are at present driving themselves about the capital in basket carriages, many of them having what "we most politely call" "golden hair." Macbeth should be performed there just now, with Locke's music, it might be deemed expedient to omit that passage of very plain English, delivered by one of the witches, in contributing to the cauldron a certain quantity of a young lady of that description. However, the plurality of golden-haired young ladies in Paris is, according to the authority above-quoted, factitious. The hair of most of them is golden only in the sense of gilt. It owes that peculiar colour to the *peigne*. Golden hair is fashionable in the French metropolis. May we venture to say that carrots are in season there? In London this autumn they have not come up.—*Punch.*

RATHER AWKWARD.—A gentleman of our acquaintance, who is sometimes extremely unfortunate in the selection of his phrases, remarked at a party, lately, in the hearing of the mamma of the "belle of the evening," who had just risen from the piano, "Yes, she is, indeed, a charming girl—a very nice creature" "nice schrecker."—*Punch.*

TEETOTAL TIPLING.—The other day we observed among the applications for music and dancing licenses, one from a Mr. R. Fort, who required a license for a "Temperance Hall." But it appeared he kept a beer-house next door to the teetotal assembly-rooms, and the inference can be as easily drawn as the beer, and the meaning of the propinquity conveyed to the mind as easily as the liquid to the mouths which made hollow professions of abstinence. The near neighbourhood of Mr. Fort's beer-house and his pump-room

can hardly be a fortuitous concurrence, and it is easy to see why good teetotalers should so frequently "take a drop-in" at the Temperance Hall.—*Punch.*

WHERE THE BEE SUCKS.—We observe that her Majesty, while staying at Balmoral, paid a visit to Clova. This established the fact that Clova is in Scotland, although certain foreigners have endeavoured, by calling it "Dutch Clover," to persuade us that it formed part of another country. Perhaps the Dutch would like us to believe that they took it when they took Holland.—*Punch.*

THE STRONG ARM, NOT THE ARMSTRONG.—It is reported by a correspondent with Sherman's army, that the rebels are doing considerable execution with the Whitworth rifle, with which the skirmishers are armed, and which for accuracy, range, and power of penetration, surpasses the Federal arm. But it will have to possess far greater range ere it can arrive at the Horse Guards' intelligence—far greater accuracy ere it can hit the grain of sense which the Horse Guards may perhaps possess—and far greater powers of penetration ere it can pierce the rhinoceros-hide of routine and patronage.—*Punch.*

WISHES.

GIVE me a cot in some secluded valley,
And let there be a garden full of roses,
With many a winding walk and pleasant alley,
Wherein the wanton wind with sweets may daily,
That every bud discloses.

And trellised vines shall round the porch be creeping,
Whose fiery blood shall blush in clusters sunny;
And busy bees shall in the cells be peeping
Of crimson honeysuckles, from them reaping
Harvests of purest honey.

Close by a gentle streamlet shall be flowing,
Whose silvery voice o'er pebbles bubbles sweetly,
On whose green banks are thousand wild flowers
blowing,
Glimpses of blue sky in its bosom glowing,
Ne'er hidden by leaves completely.

And a near wood where twilight shades are teeming,
Filled with old oaks with branches mossed and hoary,
With here and there the sunlight through them streaming,
Shall lure my soul to high romantic dreaming
Of days of ancient story.
And whilst soft breezes through the trees are sighing,
Their voice shall mingle, too, with my communing;
And bright-winged warblers, through the foliage flying,
Shall to their mates be liquidly replying,
With throats of richest tuning.

No painful discords from the world shall reach me;
No painted vice nor friendships feigned and hollow
To leave my quiet haunts shall e'er beseech me;
But Nature's sympathetic tones shall teach me
The paths of right to follow.

But lest my solitude, perchance, should weary,
And I become all dull, all sad, and lonely,
Love's purple light shall charm each prospect dreary,
With one whose soul shall make my own more cheery,
While I shall love her only.

W. L. S.

GEMS.

KEEP your eyes wide open before marriage; half shut afterwards.

EVERYBODY condemns scandal, yet nothing circulates so readily.

BEAUTY to women is like the flower in spring; but virtue is like the stars of heaven.

HAPPINESS grows at our own firesides, and is not to be picked in strangers' gardens.

EVERYWHERE endeavour to be useful, and everywhere you will be at home.

TEACH children to love everything that is beautiful, and you will teach them to be useful and good.

Most of their faults women owe to us, while we are indebted to them for most of our better qualities.

WANT patiently, desire moderately, and act conscientiously, and all that you hope for reasonably shall be fulfilled.

In love we grow acquainted because we are already attached; in friendship we must know each other before we love.

EXPERIENCE teaches, it is true, but she never teaches in time. Each event brings its lesson, and the lesson is remembered, but the same event never occurs again.

THE most beautiful thing on earth is the human soul, for it is the soul, that beams through the

eyes. It is the mind and heart that is stamped upon the features. It is the spirit which gives expression to the face. And this, which is most desirable, is most attainable.

STATISTICS.

FRENCH STEAM NAVY.—An idea may be formed of the expense of maintaining a steam navy from an inspection of the Budget of the Minister of Marine, from which it appears that a steam-frigate of 450 horse power consumes 1,644*f.* worth of coal in twenty-four hours; a steam corvette of 320 horse power, 1,233*f.*; a steam corvette of 220 horse power, 925*f.*; a steam-boat of 160 horse power, 719*f.* Thus a steam frigate making a voyage which lasts a month will expend 50,000*f.* worth of fuel, or 600,000*f.* in the year. It must further be observed that ships of war of 600 horse power consume 2,000*f.* worth of coal daily. The ships of war Alexandre, Jena, or Ville de Paris, consume 700,000*f.* worth of coal annually. The Imperial Navy consumes 80,000,000 kilogrammes of coal.

THE PETROLEUM TRADE.—The shipments of petroleum during the present year to all parts of the world amounted to 12,943,486 gallons against 13,491,877 in 1863, being a falling off of 443,391 gallons. The shipments to Liverpool during the present year were 499,645 gallons, against 1,643,447 in 1863, to London 1,644,099 gallons against 1,644,447 in 1863, to Glasgow 317,388 gallons against 350,079 in 1863, and to Cork 2,129,213 gallons against 1,193,569 in 1863. The shipments from Boston this year were 946,618 gallons against 1,332,779 in 1863, from Philadelphia 4,903,275 gallons against 4,283,046 in 1863, from Baltimore 603,889 gallons against 728,571 in 1863, and from other ports 2,271 gallons against 288,643 in 1863; making the total shipments from the Western Continent in 1864, 19,403,989 gallons against 20,102,316 last year. The importance which this article is taking in France may be judged from the fact, that in the first seven months of the present year the total quantity imported was 9,795 tons (it is counted by weight), and that all, with the exception of the insignificant quantity of three tons, was taken out of bond for consumption. Of the 9,795 tons, 1,565 arrived from England, 1862 from Belgium, 8,039 from the United States, the rest from other countries. The estimated value of the whole was in round figures 5,300,000*f.* (212,000*£*). The recent modification in the import duties in Italy will, no doubt, lead to the introduction of this oil into that country on an extensive scale also.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It has been sought to punish a gardener of Warsaw for growing a red and white dahlia—the Polish colours.

We hear that a new residence is to be erected at Sandringham, for the Prince of Wales, the present house offering inadequate accommodation.

The first present of the Czarewitch to Princess Dagmar is stated to have been a bracelet of the value of £17,000.

Mr. JAMES MILLER, solicitor, Edinburgh, has been sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment for having forged a signature to a legal document.

A WOMAN was found dead in her bed the other morning at Bordeaux, and the doctors assert that she died from the effects of the smell of quinces, a large basket of which was found in the room.

A SISTER of Gérard, the lion-killer, who was living at Nice, dropped down dead in an apoplectic fit when she read the news of her brother's death in a newspaper.

UNIVERSAL "SUFFERING."—The Greeks are going ahead at a very smart pace under their young Danish king; a bill authorizing universal suffrage having been adopted by the National Assembly.

RUSSIAN papers boast, on the strength of a trial trip, that their monitor Broneuocetz is better than any yet launched. She first made seven knots an hour, and again nine knots. The tower moved round without any difficulty.

The wealthiest English noblemen are the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Cleveland, the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Westminster, and the Earl of Dudley, neither of whose incomes is less than £200,000 a-year, while some exceed it by nearly one-half.

The fashionable game of croquet, which has been so generally adopted throughout the country, and which has been looked upon as quite a novel amusement, now appears to be nothing more than the revived, though modernized, game of "mall," introduced to England in the reign of James I.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JAS. E. W.—The lines are declined, with thanks.

KEMP.—You can lay on gilding by using size, and applying gold leaf.

FRED. CARCASS.—The lines on the "Civic Pageant" are declined, with thanks.

W. L.—It would be a case of illegal possession, if the boots were worn without the lodger's knowledge or consent.

T. R. D.—The marble arch from Buckingham Palace was set up at Cumberland Gate, March 20, 1851.

ANN G.—The handwriting is not absolutely bad, but it is somewhat unfinished; a defect which would be soon corrected by a little careful practice.

SHROPSHIRE.—We think you cannot do better than obtain Dr. Milligan's edition of "Magendie's Elementary Compendium of Physiology," published by Longmans.

CHRISTOPHER F. G.—We must decline the lines; the interest which they possess being entirely private and personal.

INQUIRITIVE POLLY.—Of course, it is quite proper for lovers to exchange tokens of affection. Indeed, *gates d'amour* are of the very essence of love.

ARCHER C. W.—You can find no better periodical published, either weekly or monthly, than our own. (For reply to your other question, see answer to "Pedestrian.")

AMELIA, dark-eyed, and sweet seventeen, would like to correspond (with a view to matrimony) with a gentleman of about twenty, or a little more, tall, and fair.

Moss Rose.—Our opinion of the word-portrait may be given in the two last words of "Moss Rose's" communication—viz., "most pleasing."

C. R. C.—We cannot otherwise aid you than by referring you to Carlisle's "Endowed Grammar Schools," which will, no doubt, assist your inquiry.

WEPPING WILLOW.—There is no "difference" possible between "poetry and blank verse." The noblest poem in the English or any other language is "Paradise Lost," and that is written in blank verse.

B. P.—The lines in rejoinder to the poetical query which appeared in a recent number, entitled, "Is there anything to laugh at?" supply in themselves a very conclusive reply to the question.

ENCINE DRIVER.—You can obtain the information necessary for your purpose by inspecting the various specifications of patents on the subject in the Patent Office, South-amption Buildings, Chancery Lane.

J. B. A.—In the matter of surnames, any man may assume any name he pleases; and, after public declaration thereof, may perform legal acts under it. You have legal right only to your mother's name, but may assume the other.

JANE W.—No, the name Isabel is not the English form of the Hebrew name Jezebel; it comes from the Portuguese (as we have formerly stated), in which language it is the exact equivalent of Elizabeth. In fact, Elizabeth and Isabel are identical. The name means the "oath of God."

F. Y.—The College of Physicians cannot confer the title of Doctor of Medicine, or M.D. They can make licentiates in physic, but not with the title of M.D.; that must be obtained at Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, or Glasgow, by keeping terms and a regular course of study.

GEORGE G.—You should allow your relatives to guide you in the selection of your future calling. We cannot recommend either of the occupations which you specify—by one the poor and necessitous are victimized, and by the other the foolish and vicious are ruined.

C. J.—In cases of ordinary contract, an "infant" in law who may enter into such contract with a person of full age may take advantage of his minority, and resist fulfillment of the contract. But an "infant" in law may make a valid contract of marriage.

WILLIAM WALLACE says plainly that he is in want of a wife, who must be good-looking, and have a sweet temper, and be not more than nineteen years of age. He is twenty-one, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, of light complexion, and has £160 per annum.

LORENCE, who is eighteen, of fair complexion, has brown hair and light blue eyes, and is about 5 ft. 5 in. in height, is willing to correspond matrimonially with a nice-looking gentleman about twenty years of age, of dark complexion, and very respectable.

J. J.—Candidates for clerkships in the Secretary's Office of the Inland Revenue are required to pass a satisfactory examination by the Civil Service Commissioners, in writing from dictation, arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions), English composition, geography, and the history of the British empire.

PEDESTRIAN.—To walk gracefully, the body must be erect, but not rigid, and the head held up so that the eyes may be directed forward. Untaught walkers have a habit of looking towards their feet; but the eyes should never be cast downward; neither should the chest bend forward, to throw out the back, making what is termed round shoulders. The whole person must hold itself up, as if not afraid to look the world in the face, and the chest allowed the fullest expansion. At the same time, anything like strutting or pomposity must be carefully avoided—an easy, firm, and

erect posture being alone desirable. Briefly, in walking, it should be remembered that the locomotion is to be performed by the legs. Awkward persons rock from side to side, helping forward each leg alternately by advancing the hip, which is not only ungraceful, but fatiguing. Let the legs alone advance, bearing up the body, and let the foot be placed firmly on the ground.

OTHELLO.—The usual course of preparing for the stage is to receive instruction in elocution from a person qualified to impart a knowledge of stage "business"; and in the theatrical papers you will find advertisements of several such. We give you permission to dramatize the tale in question.

RHODA.—If a person possessed of personal property die intestate, or without a will, letters of administration will be granted on application to the district registrar of the Probate Court. In the case which you put, the personal property of the deceased intestate will be shared equally between mother and sister, or sisters.

S. D.—The origin of the phrase, "in a brown study," has been said to be a corruption of brow study; it has, however, more probably some connection with the French corresponding term, "Aneur brune," literally a brown humour or dissipation. "Avoir l'ameur brune," in that language, is to be of a sombre, melancholy temperament.

LADY V.—Yes, marriage was at one time in England performed as a civil ceremony only. In the parish register of St. Giles, Camberwell, you will find no fewer than fourteen instances recorded, in which the ceremony was performed, not by a clergyman, but by a magistrate. These marriages, however, took place when the Puritans were in power.

J. S. B.—The correct designation of Her Royal Highness is Princess Alexandra of Wales. No female has ever been created Princess of Wales, nor could any female inherit that title under the limitations which have always been observed in the descent or creation of the dignity of Prince of Wales since the time of Edward I.

PARTING DAY.

The sunset burns—the hamlet aspire

Gleams gradually, fill in purple fire—

The river rolls on—

The flowers are drenched in floating haze,

The churchyard brightens, and old days

Seem smiling o'er the dead.

From pendent boughs, like drops of gold,

The peaches hang; the mansion old,

From out its nest of green,

Looks joyful through its shining eyes,

Back on the sunset-burnished skies;

A smile o'er all the scene.

The laughing child, whose wavy hair

Takes from the sunset's level glare

A purer, brighter tinge,

Rolls on the grass, the evening star

Above you streak of cloudy bar,

Hangs on Earth's purple fringe.

Where latest sunshine slanting falls,

Above the ivied orchard walls,

The tall tree shadow lean

In waving lines of shade, that nod

Like dusky streams across the road,

With banks of light between.

The streams are gilt—the towering vane

Stands burnish'd; and the cottage pane

Seems melting in the sun;

The last lark wavers down the sky,

The husky crow slides careless by,

The golden day is done.

JAMES M.

ANNIE LOUISE would like to correspond with a gentleman with view to matrimony. She is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. in height, has dark hair, hazel eyes, light complexion, and a tolerable set of teeth. The gentleman must be both older and taller than herself; and preference given to a dark gentleman.

A. D.—No minister of the Church of England is compelled to perform the marriage ceremony for any person whose former marriage may have been dissolved by the Divorce Court; he may use his own discretion in the matter, and he can only be compelled to permit some other clergyman to officiate in the church instead of himself.

CHARLES FORTESCUE, aged twenty-one, 6 feet in height, of dark complexion, and considered handsome, is desirous of meeting with a suitable partner to share his affections, who must be thoroughly versed in domestic economy, a good musician, and respectfully connected. He has an income of £300 a year, with expectations, and is willing to exchange *cartes de visite* with "Bobbeday."

C. H.—The first approach to the penny postage was made in December, 1839, when a uniform rate of 4d. was introduced. In January, 1840, the penny postage was adopted. The first stamps were black, and these continued till 1841, when red stamps were introduced. The blue two-penny stamp followed, and then came the embossed stamped envelopes.

ALVIA.—You must not forget the maxim, *poets nascuntur, non fit*—poets are born, not made; and there is not as yet, any "handy-book" published that will enable you to prove the contrary by producing verses with mechanical facility. As to the writers on the art of poetry, their name is legion; and we should probably only confuse your mind by naming them. You will find a work on the subject in any library.

S. C. R.—To improve the complexion, the following is very efficacious:—Mix flowers of sulphur in a little milk; and if, after standing an hour or two, the milk (without the sulphur) be rubbed into the skin, it will keep it soft, and make the complexion clear. Make over-night, and use in the morning, before washing. Only sufficient for one application should be made at a time.

MARIL.—Furs—that is to say, sables, chinchilla, squirrel, fitch, &c.—may be cleaned as follows:—Warm some new bran in a pan, taking care that it does not burn, which can be prevented by active stirring. When well warmed, rub it thoroughly into the fur with the hand; repeat this operation two or three times; then shake the fur, and brush it carefully. White furs, ermine, &c., may be cleaned by laying the fur on a table, and rubbing it well with bran moistened with warm water; then rub quite dry, and afterwards with dry

bran. The wet bran should be applied with funnel, and the dry with a piece of book muslin. Light fur, in addition, should be well rubbed with magnesia or a piece of book muslin, after the application of the bran.

JAS. THOS. T.—The standard of qualifications for candidates for clerkships in the post-office is not high. It consists merely in handwriting, orthography, and arithmetic (reduction, rule of three, and practice), by which subjects you must pass a satisfactory examination. The limits of age are from 18 to 25. Apply to the Civil Service Commissioners, Dean's Yard, Westminster. Your handwriting is very fair.

CLARA C.—The recipe for cleansing and beautifying the teeth, to which you refer, is the following:—Dissolve two ounces of borax in three pints of water; before quite cold, add thereto one teaspoonful of tincture of myrrh, and one tablespoonful of spirits of camphor; then bottle the mixture for use. One wineglassful, mixed with half a pint of tepid water, is sufficient for each application, and will preserve the teeth and give them a pearl-like whiteness.

P. M. P.—You are entirely in error; members of Parliament were anciently paid for their services. The wages to be received by members of Parliament were fixed by Edward II., at the low rate of 4s. a day for a knight of the shire, and 2s. for a citizen or burgess. So lightly, however, was the elective franchise then held, that many boroughs petitioned to be excused from sending members to Parliament, on account of the expense.

X. Q.—You can make a decoction of sarsaparilla by taking four ounces of the root, which you must slice down, and put the slices into four pints of water; then simmer for four hours. Take out the sarsaparilla, and boil down to two pints; then strain, and let the liquor cool. A wineglassful three times a day may be taken with advantage. The root can be purchased at most respectable apothecaries, or at Apothecaries' Hall.

X. D.—The law respecting the registration of children born at sea is, that if any child of an English parent shall be born at sea, on board a British vessel, the captain or commanding officer shall make a certificate to that particular touching the birth of the child, and shall, on the arrival of the vessel at any port of the kingdom, or sooner by any other opportunity, send a certificate of the birth, through the post-office, to the Registrar-General, General Register Office, London. Therefore, you must apply to that officer.

INQUISITE.—Earl Russell is not a Scotchman by birth; his lordship was born on the 18th of July, 1792, in Herford Street, Mayfair; and is the third son of the late Duke of Bedford, by the second daughter of George Viscount Torrington. He received his first education in a school at Sunbury, and then was placed in Westminster School; subsequently proceeding to the University of Edinburgh, where, his education was completed. So far only have Scotchmen any peculiar claim to his lordship.

ALICE LE GAY has been thinking the matter over, and has come to the conclusion she must get a husband. Although she has many admirers, there is not one she could love or honour. She is not difficult to please; but the husband of her choice must be a gentleman by birth and education, tall, dark, musical, and good-tempered—his income sufficient to keep a wife. "Alice" is eighteen years of age, *petite* and prepossessing; a thorough pianist and singer, and an experienced housekeeper; very lively and good-tempered. ("Harry" might possibly suit this young lady).

D. A.—The nature of the stones of which Stonehenge is built has been satisfactorily established; not, however, by Sir R. Murchison, but by the late Dr. Mantell, who, in his "Geology of the South-east Coast of England," refers them to a stratum lying originally just above the chalk, part of which, consisting of loose sand, has been washed away, leaving these concreted masses or boulders scattered over the surface of our downs—as such as the so-called Plain of Salisbury, which is really a series of undulating hills. The builders of Stonehenge would therefore find them ready to their hands in their natural state, and would be under no necessity of transporting them from Ireland, or, as some say, from Africa.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—Jane, who has no income, but is not without money, would like to correspond with "Joseph" (No. 75). Is middle aged, tall, dark, and domesticated.—"Benjamin" offers himself to "Ada," from whom he would like to hear again; and is willing to exchange *cartes de visite* with "A. S. M.," who is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. in height, fair complexion, brown hair, and having good presence; would like to correspond with "C. Ernest," offers her hand and heart to "William," who is twenty-two years of age, has dark hair and eyes, and dark complexion, very affectionate, and extremely fond of children; and would endeavour to make his home happy.—"Fathima," would like to correspond matrimony with "Leonard H. Vesey," to whom she thinks she could give her heart as well as hand. Is nineteen years of age, tall, and has dark hair and eyes. *Cartes de visite* to be exchanged.—"Edith" would like to correspond with "M. A. B." She is rather *petite* in figure, has dark blue eyes and black hair, age twenty, thoroughly domesticated, and would make "M. A. B." a loving wife.—"Kate Vernon," who is tall, has light blue eyes and light wavy hair, and is very fond of music, deaf—*deaf*—"Minton's" *cartes de visite*—"Bertrand" would like to correspond with "Edith" at once. He is refined in taste, stalwart, ardent, and warm-hearted, and highly connected.—"Eleanor," who is tall, of fair complexion, and thirty-six years of age, thinks she would suit the "Widower."

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